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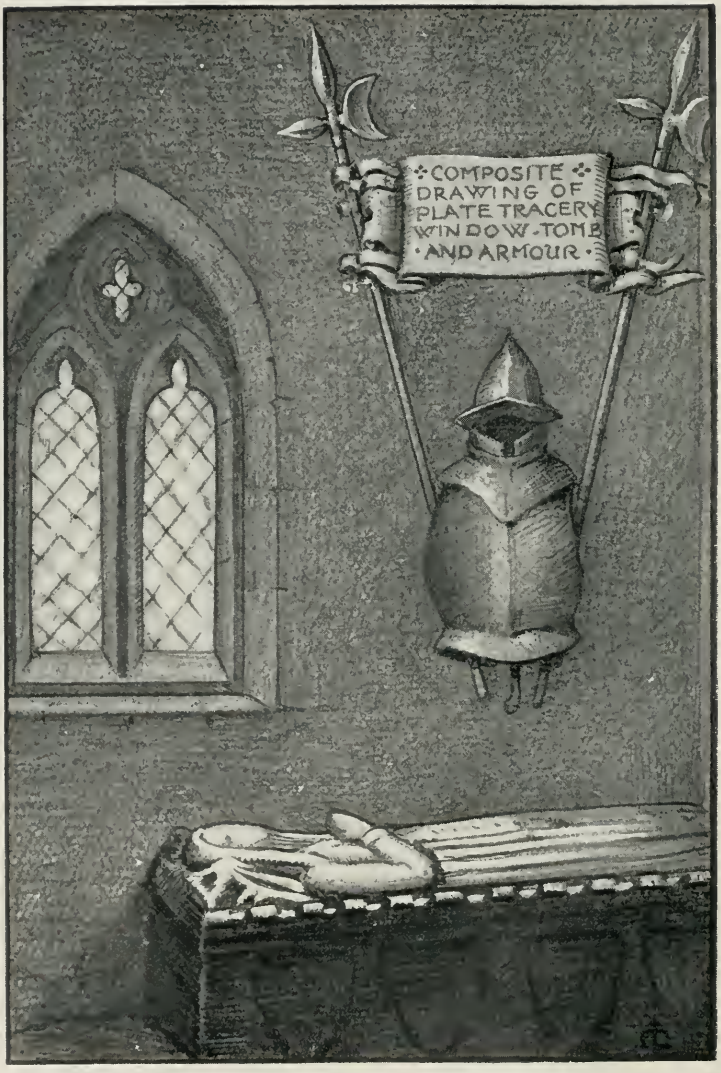
MEDIÆVAL LEICESTER.


COMPOSITE
DRAWING OF
PLATE TRACERY
WINDOW-TOMB
AND ARMOUR

MEDIÆVAL LEICESTER

BY

Charles James Billson, M.A.
Corpus Christi College, Oxford

In Athens, Sparta, Florence, 'twas the soul
That was the city's bright, immortal part,
The splendour of the spirit was their goal,
Their jewel, the unconquerable heart.

So may the city that I love be great
Till every stone shall be articulate.

William Dudley Foulke

LEICESTER
EDGAR BACKUS, 46, CANK STREET
1920

LOAN STACK

DA690
L55B55

TO THE MEMORY OF THOSE
CITIZENS OF LEICESTER
WHO LAID DOWN THEIR LIVES
·· IN THE GREAT WAR ··
PRESERVING THEIR
OWN HERITAGE-
FOR OTHERS.

822

This Edition is strictly limited to 1,000 copies,
after which the type will be distributed.

This is No.

PREFACE.

IN the following pages an attempt has been made to gather together some information, concerning the ancient City of Leicester, which is now scattered over many volumes and documents, some of which are not readily accessible to the ordinary reader. A chapter has been added, for the sake of the student, giving references to the original authorities.

The book had its beginning in a Lecture on "Leicester in the Fourteenth Century," which I gave in the year 1897, at the request of the Leicester Museum Committee. A few years ago, I happened to find the notes of this old harangue, with the plans and illustrations of mediæval Leicester then prepared, all of which had been lying undisturbed for some twenty years. This discovery re-kindled my interest in the subject, and led to the studies now printed under the name of "Mediæval Leicester."

The title is not, I fear, very accurate; for the period which it is intended to cover really begins with the Conquest, and comprises the next 500 years, or thereabouts. In the strict language of historians, the Middle Ages came to an end in England with the last of the Plantagenets. The word "mediæval," is often extended, however, in popular usage, to the Tudor period; and it is in this sense that I have ventured to use it—indeed, in some cases, I must plead guilty to trespassing yet further into the modern era.

To all those who have helped me in the preparation of this book I am deeply indebted.

Without the enthusiastic co-operation of Mr. S. H. Skillington, who has grudged no pains to further its production, it would never have been published. He has helped me in every possible way, with so much knowledge and with such good-will that I cannot adequately express my thanks. I feel as the Trojans felt of yore, when they received the royal Carthaginian bounty—

"Grates persolvere dignas
Non opis est nostrae."

I am most grateful also to Mr. A. B. McDonald, A.R.C.A. (Lond.), of the Leicester School of Art, who has been very generous and successful in preparing plans and drawings, and in supervising the illustrations contained in the volume. I wish also to thank Col. C. F. Oliver, D.L., T.D., and all others who have so kindly helped with these embellishments, or who have allowed me to publish them; and I take this opportunity of congratulating both Mr. Newton and Mr. Keene on the good results of the photographic work entrusted to them.

I am under considerable obligations to Mr. Henry Hartopp, of Leicester, who has assisted me from the vast stores of his local knowledge; to Mr. A. Hamilton Thompson, M.A., F.S.A., who has given me much-appreciated help, chiefly in matters ecclesiological; to Mr. G. E. Kendall, A.R.I.B.A., who most obligingly made searches at the Public Record Office and elsewhere; to Mr. J. C. Challenor Smith, formerly Head of the Literary Department at Somerset House, who very kindly transcribed some original wills, and helped me in other ways; to the Mayor and Corporation of Leicester City, who readily gave me permission to print a translation of one of the unpublished documents preserved in their Muniment Room, and to publish an illustration of it; to the Venerable Archdeacon Stocks, D.D., who willingly transcribed and translated this document, and gave me other assistance; to Mr. H. A. Pritchard, the Town Clerk of Leicester; to Mr. T. H. Fosbrooke, F.S.A.; to Mr. H. M. Riley, of the Leicester Municipal Reference Library; to Mr. F. S. Herne, the Librarian of the Leicester Permanent Library, and to many others.

But those who are kind enough to help a lame dog over a stile are not answerable for his disability, and the mistakes and shortcomings of the book are all my own.

"Me, me, adsum qui feci, in me convertite ferrum!"

CHARLES JAMES BILLSON.

33, Saint Anne's Road,
Eastbourne,
October 14*th*, 1920.

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ILLUSTRATIONS.

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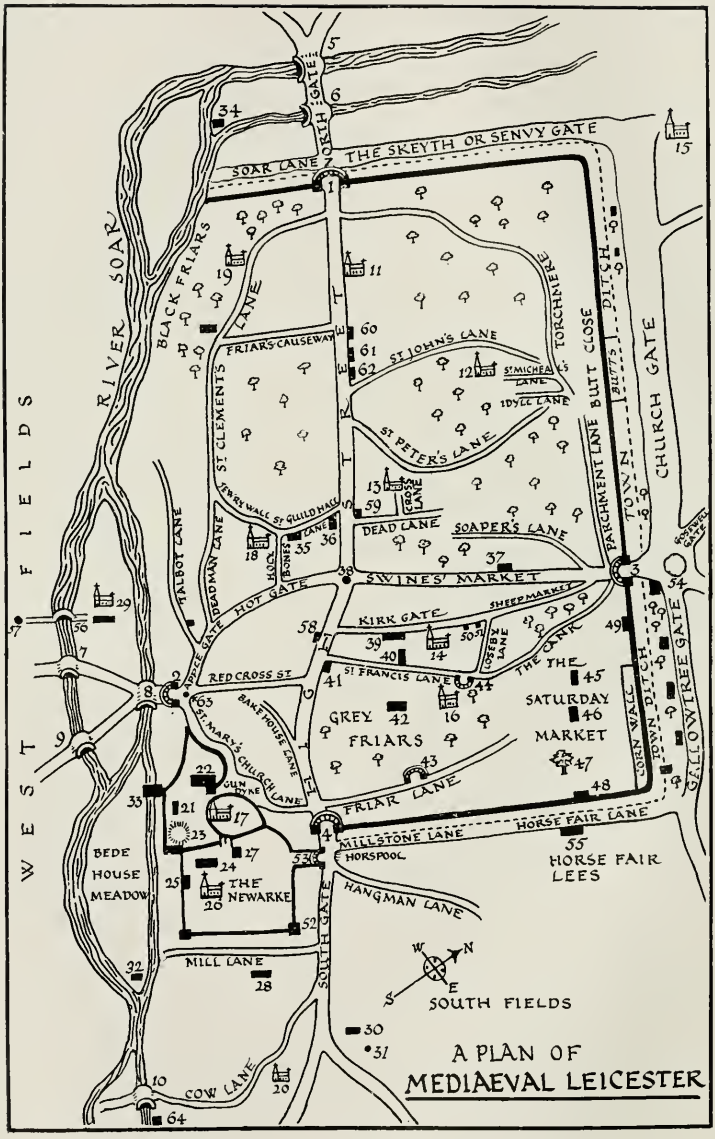
KEY TO THE PLAN OF MEDIÆVAL LEICESTER.

1. North Gate.
2. West Gate.
3. East Gate.
4. South Gate.
5. North Bridge.
6. Frogmire Bridge.
7. Bow Bridge.
8. West Bridge.
9. Braunston Bridge.
10. Cow Bridge.
11. All Saints' Church.
12. St. Michael's Church.
13. St. Peter's Church.
14. St. Martin's Church.
15. St. Margaret's Church.
16. Grey Friars' Church.
17. St. Mary's Church.
18. St. Nicholas' Church.
19. St. Clement's Church.
20. St. Sepulchre's Church.
21. Castle Hall.
22. Castle House.
23. Castle Mound.
24. Newarke Hospital.
25. Dean of Newarke's House.
26. Newarke College Church.
27. Wigston's Chantry House.
28. Newarke Grange.
29. The Austin Friars.
30. Hermitage.
31. St. Sepulchre's Well.
32. Newarke Mill.
33. Castle Mill.
34. North Mill.
35. Old Mayor's Hall.
36. Blue Boar Inn.
37. Lord's Place.
38. High Cross.
39. Guild Hall.
40. Wigston's Hospital.
41. Henry Costeyn's House.
42. The Grey Friars' Priory.
43. Grey Friars' Gateway.
44. do. do.
45. Shambles and Draperie.
46. The Gainsborough.
47. Elm Tree.
48. Green Dragon Inn.
49. Angel Inn.
50. Maiden Head Inn.
51. St. George's Guild Hall.
52. Rupert's Tower.
53. Newarke Main Gateway.
54. Bere Hill.
55. Old Barn.
56. Little Bow Bridge.
57. St. Austin's Well.
58. Roger Wigston's (?) House.
59. Free Grammar School.
60. Shirehall.
61. Prisona Regis.
62. St. John's Hospital.
63. Red Cross.
64. Mary Mill.


THE SKEYTH OR SENVY GATE
SOAR LANE
NORTH GATE
RIVER SOAR
WEST FIELDS
BLACK FRIARS
FRIARS CAUSEWAY
ST CLEMENT'S LANE
JEWRY WALL
ST GILLIAN'S HALL
TALBOT LANE
BROAD MARY LANE
HOT GATE
NEW GATE
RED CROSS ST
ST MARY'S CHURCH LANE
BAKEHOUSE LANE
SUN LANE
BEDE HOUSE MEADOW
THE NEWARKE
MILL LANE
SOUTH GATE
COW LANE
HANGMAN LANE
FRIAR LANE
MILLSTONE LANE
HORSPOOL
HORSE FAIR LANE
HORSE FAIR LEES
GREY FRIARS
THE SATURDAY MARKET
THE CANK
KIRK GATE
SHEEPMARKET
SWINES' MARKET
DEAD LANE
SOAPER'S LANE
ST FRANCIS LANE
CROSS LANE
ST PETER'S LANE
IDYLL LANE
ST MICHEAL LANE
ST JOHN'S LANE
TORCHIERE
BUTT CLOSE
PARCHMENT LANE
TOWN DITCH
CHURCH GATE
GALLOWTREE GATE
TOWN WALL
SOUTH FIELDS
A PLAN OF
MEDIAEVAL LEICESTER

MEDIÆVAL LEICESTER.

I.

THE STREETS.

THE little mediæval town of Leicester comprised about 130 acres. It was guarded on three sides by walls, which occupied, at least approximately, the site of the ancient Roman walls, or earthen ramparts. On the West lay the river Soar, and on that side no trace of any town wall has yet been found, although there was a gateway and a gate house, like the others, which stood in front of the West Bridge. The four gates of the town, over which, as early as 1322, hung the arms of the Sovereign, stood nearly at the North-West, North-East, South-East, and South-West points of the compass. The main road entered the town at the South Gate, and passed out at the North Gate, and the only other streets of importance were those which intersected the main road at the High Cross and ran to the East and West Gates. Other ways were mere lanes. The Borough Records sometimes describe the four chief streets leading to the four Gates as the four high streets, "quatuor altas stratas Leycestriae," but the High Street, *par excellence*, was that part of the King's highway which ran from the South Gate to the North. Of the two intersecting streets, that which led to the West Gate was called in part Hot-Gate, and in part Apple-Gate, and that which led to the East was known from an early date as the Swinesmarket. There were two suburbs beyond the walls, the North Suburb and the East. Outside the West Gate the Priory of the Austin Friars lay between the two arms of the river, and beyond it stretched the West Fields. The common lands of the town, known as the South Fields, or South Crofts, lay without the South Gate.

In the 13th century Leicester was divided into four Townships for police purposes, and these " vills " were known as the North, South, East and West Gates. The same division was also adopted in the collection of taxes, but as the population of one quarter would dwindle and that of another increase, changes were made from time to time in their names and boundaries. In a Pontage Roll of 1252, the division is E., N. & S. Gates, a blank (presumably W. Gate), and another blank (presumably East Suburb). In the Tallage Rolls from 1269 to 1280, the division into E., S., N. and W. quarters is regular, except that the West quarter is sometimes omitted, and the Suburb is sometimes added. It is stated once that the collectors were elected by the community from each quarter. After 1280 the practice became irregular, and in the first half of the 14th century there are many rolls with no divisions indicated. From 1342 to 1356 the division into a S. and N. quarter, an E. suburb, a Swinesmarket quarter, and a Saturday Market quarter is fairly regular. No W. quarter is mentioned, and the Bishop's tenants living in the Bishop's Fee are sometimes given separately. The Auditors of Account (1477-1492) were chosen from the E., S. and N. quarters and from the Swinesmarket. After 1492 they were chosen from " the E. quarter without the Gate," " the E. quarter within the Gate," and the S. and N. quarters. The original quarters were marked out by the four streets leading to the four gates.

I. THE NORTH QUARTER.

The Northern, or North-western half of Leicester was so ruthlessly and completely destroyed after the siege of the town in the year 1173 that it remained for many centuries the least populous. In the latter half of the 13th century the following are the numbers of taxpayers recorded in seven tallage rolls.

	Year.	Quarter. N.	W.	E.	S.	E. Suburb.	Total.	Reference in the Records of the Borough of Leicester.
1	1269	59	55	147	82	80	423	Box 3, I.128-145 Roll 86
2	1270	66	62	123	62	79	392	,, ,, 26
3	1271	73	65	153	83	94	468	,, ,, 64
4	1274	57	47	100	82	75	361	I. 148. ,, 68
5	1276	63	58	149	65	93	428	I. 150. ,, 70
6	1280	41	49	106	63	60	319	I. 184. ,, 75
7	1286	66	66	131	63	61	387	I. 208-211,, 69
		425	402	909	500	542	= 2778	
Averages :		60	57	130	71	78	= 396	
		117		279			= 396	

(The list of inhabitants of the Suburb is missing in the first roll, so the average of the six other rolls has been taken ; and in the seventh roll the N. and W. quarters are lumped together, the taxpayers in the two quarters amounting to 132, half of whom have been here allotted to each quarter.)

It will be seen that there were only 117 taxpayers in the North-western half of the town out of a total of nearly 400. That is to say, not a third of the population lived in that large part of the town which lay above the High Cross, while more than two-thirds lived in the far smaller South-eastern part and the East Suburb. In later times calculations are more difficult on account of the altered arrangement for dividing the borough ; but undoubtedly the North-western half remained all but empty, while the South-east was crowded.

The lanes in the upper part of the town, known as the " Back Lanes," where houses were once plentiful, became deserted for at least three centuries after the sack of 1173. They led chiefly to orchards and closes, and stretched so far south that St. Peter's Lane is described as one of them. The burial place of Roger Goldsmith, who was stated to have been buried in the " Back Lanes," was near Bond Street, formerly Parchment Lane. The Butt Close, where archery was practised, lay by the

East Wall, and St. Margaret's Charity School was built on part of it. This piece of ground, which comprised 1½ acres or more, was at one time rented from the Crown, and afterwards became town property. A strip of land, on which were two pairs of butts, and which lay East of the Wall, " stretching in width from the King's Highway to the wall of Leicester," was taken on a 99 years' lease in 1458 at the rent of a barbed arrow.

Of the three Churches which once stood within this quarter, All Saints', St. Peter's, and St. Michael's, the two latter fell into disuse and decay, and were entirely demolished in or before the 16th century, when their parishes were absorbed in that of All Saints'.

The most important street in this quarter of the town for many centuries was the old HIGH STREET between the North Gate and the High Cross. " It was lined on both sides," writes Thompson, speaking of the 14th century, " by houses which presented their gable ends to the road. They were not always close together as in a row, but sometimes surrounded by a plot of ground, used either as an orchard, garden, or small field. The principal inns were situated here, and were distinguishable from their size, outward appearance, and rudely painted sign-boards. . . . . The better kinds of houses had windows ; the poorer ones were supplied with lattice work in the openings. There was little, if any, pavement, and heaps of filth were frequently to be seen before the doors of the dwellings." The principal public buildings facing this street on the East side were the Church of All Saints, the Hospital of St. John, the prisona regis, or County Gaol, built in 1309, the Shire-hall, and later the Free Grammar School, built in 1573-4.

The Blue Boar Inn lay on the West side. On that side also stood the Cordwainers' Row, where the shoemakers carried on their trade, and nearly opposite to All Saints' Church, for more than three centuries, there was a Bell-foundry. Here, too, were many of the dwellings of the leading citizens, such as the house which John Reynold gave for the use of the Mayors of Leicester, and the " Stocks House," near the High Cross, with its orchard

or garden lying on the north of Dead Lane, once occupied by Alderman William Morton. This house is stated by Miss Bateson to have been the original " stock house," or store house, which was once used to contain the Borough stores of coal and other materials. The Borough store house, however, to which she refers, was situated in the Saturday Market, and not at the High Cross. Another house belonging to the community which was used as a store house was in the Holy Bones, near the Mayor's Hall. But there was " a Barne in the Ded Lane called the store howse," which belonged in 1525 to the Corpus Christi Guild, and was then " in dekey." If Morton's house took its name from any " stock house," which seems doubtful, it may have derived it from this barn.

The Wednesday Market, which was held from time immemorial at the High Cross, seems to have extended north during Elizabethan times. and in Speed's map of 1610 all that part of the High Street which lay between the Cross and the North Gate was designated " The Wednesday Market."

Leading East out of the High Street, below St. John's Hospital, and under the southern wall of its garden, was St. John's Lane, afterwards called Gaol Lane, or Bridewell Lane, and now known as Causeway Lane.

A few yards farther down, a lane left the High Street on the same side, which is described in a Coroner's Roll of 1303 as " venella que se extendit ab alta strata versus ecclesiam S. Petri et versus Torchemer," the lane stretching from the High Street towards St. Peter's Church and towards Torchmere. Nichols quotes a deed of 1586, which describes Torchmere as the old name of the Queen's Highway, " near to a place there where formerly stood a cross." It seems to have been named after a pond or watercourse, which at one time lay there, for in 1278 a man was fined for washing fells in Torchmere. The name also occurs in the form " Torchesmere," and may mean the pool where " torches " (*i.e.*, great mullein flowers) grow, as " Blabbs Mill, " near Castle Bromwich, took its name from the May-blobs that flourish by the Mill pool. Torchmere seems to have been part of the long, winding highway which is

shown on old maps of Leicester running down from near the North Gate in the general direction North-East by South, and which was known, in part of its course, as Elbow Lane.

St. Michael's Lane led west out of Torchmere towards the Church. It was described as " the common way which leads to St. Michael's Church," or " St. Michael's Lane," and in a deed of 1483 its position is indicated thus. There was a large piece of garden ground, which was bounded on the east by Torchmere, " near the Cross there," and it stretched from " a lane called Idyll Lane on the South in St. Peter's Parish to a lane called St. Michael's Lane in the Parish of St. Michael on the North." Idyll Lane seems to have been known later as Feill Lane, or Storehall Lane. St. Michael's Lane is also described as being parallel with " Blanchwell Lane."

The road leading from the High Street to St. Peter's Church is referred to in a Tallage Roll of 1354 in an abbreviated form as " Peter's " (Petri) ; in 1484 it was called " St. Peter's Church Yard Lane," and, according to Miss Watts, it was for some time known, at the beginning of the 19th century, as " Woman's Lane " ; but in Cockshaw's plan of Leicester, published in 1828, it is marked " St. Peter's Lane," by which name it is still known. The Church is thought to have stood near the corner of St. Peter's Lane and the present West Bond Street.

There was a certain blind alley leading out of the High Street, known as the Dead Lane, a name found also at Nottingham. In the year 1307 nine taxpayers were living in this " mortua venella," and in 1335 a byelaw was passed prohibiting unringed pigs in a certain part of the High Street, and " from the Church of St. Nicholas as far as the lane of Deadlane in the Swinesmarket." At the division of the town Wards in 1484, the second Ward began " in the High Street at the Mayor's Hall Lane and the Dead Lane end on both sides the street unto the North Gate." It seems, therefore, that the Dead Lane was on the Eastern side of the Old High Street, below St. Peter's Lane, and nearly opposite to Blue Boar's Lane (as the Mayor's Hall Lane was afterwards called), on or near the site of Freeschool Lane.

In 1573 William Morton granted to the town a piece of land in the High Street extending northwards from Dead Lane 61 feet. The Elizabethan Grammar School was built partly upon this site. Hence it would seem that Dead Lane was merged in Freeschool Lane. This street must be distinguished from Deadman's Lane, a later name occurring in the West quarter of the town. Both Nichols and Thompson confused them. A way ran north out of Dead Lane to St. Peter's Church, which was known as Cross Lane.

Soapers' Lane, which was in the Parish of St. Peter's, was North of the Swinesmarket, and parallel to it. It was known as " the lane of the Soapers " as early as 1314, and doubtless the Soapmakers were settled in this quarter long before that date. Two sons of a member of this trade entered the Guild Merchant about 1200. The lane does not seem to have been thickly populated, as the Corpus Christi Guild for some hundred years owned a garden there, and another large garden lying in " Soaper Lane in St. Peter's Parish," was divided up between the members of a family in 1481.

Parchment Lane was the old name of New Bond Street, running North out of the old Swinesmarket. The Parchmentmakers were settled in Leicester as members of the Guild Merchant at the beginning of the 13th century, and the " vicus parcamenorum," or " Parchmentmakers' way," is described in a deed of 1303. Lord de Grey owned four houses and six other tenements, gardens or crofts there, and the Corpus Christi Guild in the 15th and 16th centuries possessed a barn there, which had once belonged to the Grange of the Abbot of Crowland. Four gardens in St. Peter's Parish were described in 1478 as " stretching to the lane called Parchment Lane to the West as far as the wall of the town," *i.e.*, they lay between Parchment Lane and the East Wall by Churchgate. At the division of the Wards made in 1484, the sixth Ward ran " from the East Gate on both sides the street to Pexsall corner " (*i.e.*, Pexsall's house) " with Parchment Lane." In 1524 it was resolved at a common hall " that the Swinesmarket shall be kept from this day forth in the

Parchment Lane, and no more in the High Street and in the East Gate." The street subsequently acquired the name of the Swinesmarket, and is so called, as late as 1828, in Cockshaw's map. The change was not made, however, until long after 1524, for in the Borough rental of 1594 it was still described as Parchment Lane.

The Swinesmarket, the present High Street, running from the High Cross to the East Gate, was throughout the Middle Ages, a very populous and important thoroughfare, and gave its name to the district. Here once stood the King's Horse Mill. About midway down the street on the north side was the large dwelling house purchased by the Earl of Huntingdon in 1569 for £100, and thenceforth known as " Lord's Place." When Parchment Lane became the place of the market for pigs in the 16th century, the old Swinesmarket was rechristened High Street, as it appears in Speed's map of 1610, the former High Street then becoming High Cross Street. It will be remembered that the Swinesmarket was always one of the four " high streets " of the town. It was described, in 1523, as " the Hy Street which is in the Est yate," and in 1587 it was called " High Street, alias Swinesmarket."

II. THE EAST QUARTER.

The greater part of the land in this quarter of the town was occupied by the Saturday Market, which lay at the South-eastern corner, bounded by the town walls, and by the Monastery of the Grey Friars, whose house stood south of Peacock Lane, and whose grounds extended, according to Throsby, from the upper end of the Market Place to the Friar Lane meeting house, that is, within four chains of the old High Street.

The principal mediæval thoroughfares were Kirk Gate, The Sheepmarket, St. Francis Lane, The Cank, Loseby Lane, and Friar Lane. The road which ran beyond the South wall was known in the middle of the 15th century by its present name of Millstone Lane. In Queen Elizabeth's Charter of 1589 this road, or the Eastern portion of it, is called Horse Fair Lane.

Nichols followed Throsby in identifying Millstone Lane with Hangman Lane, a name which occurs as early as 1337. But Hangman Lane would seem rather to correspond with Newarke Street, as in Combe's plan of 1802. This is indicated by the terms of the extension of the Cattle Market, in 1783, " down the South Gate to the Horse Pool, and also along the Welford Road to St. Mary's Workhouse or across Hangman Lane if necessary."

Kirk Gate is now called Town Hall Lane. In 1354 it was described as " Venella Martini," " Martin's Lane." In 1458 it appears as " Kirk Lane," in 1478 as " Kirk Gate," in 1483 it is called " the church lane unto the High Street " ; in 1493, " St. Martin's Church Lane " ; and, in 1505, " Church Lane." In 1494 the Abbot of Leicester paid rent to the Corpus Christi Guild for a house which he then occupied, called " The corner house " in the " Kyrke Lane End." It was also known as Holy Rood Lane. One of the objects of " squinting Pollard's " defalcations, in 1670, was a tenement described by Throsby as being in " Holy Rood Lane, now Town Hall Lane."

The Sheepmarket is the modern Silver Street. It was described in 1352 as " the lane which leads from the East Gate to the Church of St. Martin." In the next century it was known as the Sheepmarket, being so named in 1458. It was afterwards known as " the lane at the backside of the Lion," because, says Nichols, " where now is the sign of the King's Arms there was formerly the sign of the Lion till about 1670." He was, however, mistaken in identifying it with *vicus calidus*, or Hot Gate, which was the old name of St. Nicholas Street. When the market for sheep ceased to be held in the old Sheepmarket, at the beginning of the 16th century, the street became known as Silver Street, and is so named in Hall papers of 1587. The name may have been an old one revived, suggested perhaps by the shops of silversmiths. There is a Silver Street, as well as a Gold Street, at Northampton, the latter being the place where the Goldsmiths worked, and the former, part of the old Jewry, the locality of the Silversmiths. That silversmiths worked at Leicester is indicated by the occurrence of the name Silver, or

Silverun, a silverer or silversmith. The name is not so common as Goldsmith, but John Silver was one of the Town Chamberlains in 1500, and in the 13th century several Silveruns are mentioned, who, as might be expected, inter-married with the Aurifabers, or Goldsmiths.

In the 15th century there was a street leading out of, or close to, the Sheepmarket, which was known as Gentil Lane.

Saint Francis Lane was described in the Coroner's Pleas for the year 1300 as " the lane which leads to St. Martin's Church and towards the Church of the Friars Minors." A house conveyed in 1368, which had once belonged to the well-known Leicester merchant, Henry Costeyn, was said to be in the High Street, " at the corner of the lane leading to the Church of the Friars Minors," and the property extended from the High Street to the garden of the Friars Minors. This lane must be the " St. Francis Lane " referred to by Mr. Carte, the 18th century antiquarian Vicar of St. Martin's, as lying between Wigston Hospital and the Grey Friars. It was afterwards called Peacock Lane, taking its name probably from the piece of land known as the " Peacock," which lay " at the Red Cross," west of the old High Street. There was a Peacock Inn in Southgate Street, from which it might have taken its name, but it seems more likely that both Inn and Lane were christened after the old Peacock ground.

The Cank, or Cank Street, which still bears its old name, was named after the public well, the Cank well, which lay there. An apple-orchard (pomerium), which was situated in the " Cank," is mentioned in 1352. On the division of the Wards in 1484, the ninth Ward was to begin " in the Cank at Thomas Phelips on both sides the Saturday Market unto the East Gate." At the division into ten Wards in 1557, the eighth Ward comprised " all the market-place, Cank-well, and to the East Gate." A yearly payment was given in 1563 to St. Martin's Church " out of an house at the Cankwell." The site of the old well is still marked on the roadway at the junction of Cank Street and Hotel Street. The name might possibly be derived from

the old word " canch," which is used in Yorkshire and Norfolk to denote " a sloping trench, a water channel, cut on a road." In Leicestershire this word is generally used in the form "kench," *e.g.*, to " kench " potatoes is to make a pit for them to lie in, to camp them. But there seems to be no evidence of an artificial conduit in the Cank. The conduit in the market-place was not put up till 1612.

Loseby Lane, the short street still so called, is said to date from the 13th century, and to derive its name from John de Loseby. It is perhaps more likely that it was named after Henry of Loseby, a Leicester burgess, who held a considerable quantity of land in the Parish of St. Martin and elsewhere in the Eastern quarter of Leicester about 1300. Loseby Lane bounded one of the 1484 Wards. In the days of Throsby and Nichols it was called the " Pig-market."

Friar Lane, as it is still called, ran east out of the old High Street, by the south side of the gate and walls of the Grey Friars' precincts into the Saturday Market. It was so named in 1392, when a messuage was described as being " at the corner opposite the gate of the Friars Preachers," and bounded on the north side by " a lane called Frere Lane." In 1484 it seems to have been known as the Grey Friars' Lane.

III. THE SOUTH QUARTER.

The South quarter of the mediæval town was bounded on the North by the Hot Gate and Apple Gate leading to the West Gate and Bridge ; and on the West by the river. On the East lay the old High Street, and on the South, until the middle of the 14th century, the South wall of the town, and after that time the Newarke.

There were few roads and few houses in this quarter, which comprised chiefly the Castle and its precincts, with St. Mary's Church, beyond which lay the 14th century Newarke, the whole enclosed by strong walls. Here too were butchers' shambles and bakers' ovens.

The mediæval streets were the main intersecting highway, consisting of the Hot Gate and the Apple Gate, Red Cross Street, and Soar Lane or St. Mary's Church Lane. The lane running South of the Newarke from the High Road to the Mill on the River was called Mill Lane in the middle of the 14th century.

The HOT GATE is mentioned in 1297, when John the Noble belied his name by committing a burglary there. It was known as " vicus calidus," or Hot Gate, because the public ovens were situated in that locality. A conveyance, dated 1362, of a house in the Hot Gate to a baker, is extant. The memory of the ovens which once warmed this part of the town is still kept alive by the name of Bakehouse Lane, or Fosbrooke Bakehouse Lane, a street which was comprised under the same name in the eleventh Ward of 1484. In the year 1586 the Hot Gate was described in a Lease as " Hot Gate, late the lane of the common oven." Nichols and North erroneously identified it with Silver Street, but its position is clearly determined by the Ward division of 1484, wherein the tenth Ward began " at the High Cross southward on both sides the street unto the Grey Friars' Lane and the Soar Lane, the Hot Gate and so forth to the West Bridge." It is now called St. Nicholas Street.

APPLEGATE, the continuation of Hot Gate towards the West Bridge, still bears the same name. In the 14th century it was known as Apple Lane. In 1349 a house in " Apple Lane " was described as adjoining the bakehouse of the Earl and stretching from that lane to the Holy Bones. This identifies Apple Lane with Apple Gate. The same, or another house, described in 1471 as being in the Applegate and adjoining the King's bakehouse, also stretched to the Holy Bones. It would seem that the street was also known as Shambles Lane, and that the common shambles of the butchers lay there. There was another Butchers' Shambles in the Saturday Market, which in time superseded the Applegate. In a 16th century petition the Company of Leicester Butchers expressed a wish to confine their business to the Saturday Market shambles, as the shambles in St. Nicholas Parish were then " out of the way of trading and remote from the inns and shopkeepers." In 1594 both butchers and bakers were

tenants of the Borough in Applegate. Throsby says that Shambles Lane led to the West Bridge, and Nichols identifies it with Applegate. It has been suggested that the first part of the name " Applegate " may be the French word " appeller," and that it refers to the watchtower on the adjacent Castle Wall, where the sentinel used to " call " the hour of the night. But it may be derived, perhaps more naturally, from the former presence of apple trees.

Red Cross Street, which runs west from the old High Street, opposite Peacock Lane, still retains its old name. This is said by some to be derived from Rede, or Rood, *quasi* Rede or Rood Cross Street. But the Dean of St. Mary's de Castro in 1494 occupied a house belonging to the Corpus Christi Guild, which is described as being " ad rubiam crucem," and from other entries in the accounts of the Guild it may be inferred that this Red Cross was in Red Cross Street. It was called Red Cross Street in 1557, when the second of the ten town Wards was made to run from the South Gate unto the High Cross with the Soar Lane and Red Cross Street. In Speed's plan of Leicester a cross is shown at the junction of Red Cross Street and St. Mary's Church Lane.

The lane now called Soar Lane, which ran from the North Bridge to the river, outside the town wall, was in mediæval times generally called Walker Lane, after the Walkers, or Fullers who dwelt there. It was named Soar Lane as early as 1458. But there was, at that time, another Soar Lane, in the South quarter, and the two were distinguished in the Rental of the Corpus Christi Guild of that date as " Soar Lane extra portam borialem," Soar Lane without the North Gate, and " Soar Lane juxta Castrum," or " Sorelane que ducit ad Castrum," Soar Lane near, or leading to, the Castle. The latter street ran out of the High Street towards Castle and river from a point nearly opposite to Friar Lane, as we may conclude from the boundaries of the tenth Ward in 1484. It is the lane mentioned in 1325, when some brawlers, after a dispute in the High Street, are said to have gone quarrelling to " the lane which leads to the Castle."

The modern road which answers to this old Soar Lane seems to be the present Castle Street, " one of the most narrow entrances of the town " in the time of Throsby, which was formerly known as St. Mary's Church Lane.

IV. THE WEST QUARTER.

The remaining quarter of the town is that contained by the Town Wall on the North, the river on the West, the High Street on the East, and Hot Gate and Applegate on the South.

It comprised the ancient Churches of St. Nicholas and St. Clement, and the Monastery of the Black Friars, which occupied 16 acres. There, too, lay the old Blue Boar Inn, and the earliest halls of the Guild Merchant.

Among the few lanes in this quarter were the Guildhall Lane, St. Clement's Lane, Friars' Causeway, Deadman's Lane, Jewry Wall Street, and Talbot Lane.

The Guildhall Lane was described in 1301 as " the lane which leads from the High Street to the Moothall " ; and in 1341, when it was paved, as " the lane towards the Guildhall." In the next century it was called " Mayor's Hall Lane." It ran out of the High Street by the side of the Blue Boar Inn, and has since been known unto the present day as Blue Boar Lane—a name said by Hutton to have been at one time corrupted into " Blubber Lane."

St. Clement's Lane was a long passage running from the North Gate westward to the Black Friars and St. Clement's Church, and afterwards turning south, and passing between the grounds of the Black Friars and the backs of the houses which stood facing the old High Street opposite All Saints' Church. It was also known as " The Black Friars Lane." Thus, the first Town Ward of 1484 beginning at the High Cross extended to " the Black Friars Lane." Another name was " the lane of the Friars Preachers." The parcels contained in a deed of 1498 throw some light upon the topography of this quarter. Four cottages were demised which lay together " in the lane of

the Friars Preachers, between the land late William Hore's on the East and the said lane on the West, and stretching from the tenement of Robert Metcalf, butcher, on the South, to the lane which leads to the house of the Friars on the North." It appears from this description that the " Lane of the Friars Preachers," *i.e.*, St. Clement's Lane, lay at right angles to another lane which led to the Friars' House, the FRIARS' CAUSEWAY, probably, of the present day. It is this path from the High Street to the Friars which was described in 1373 as " the lane leading to the Friars Preachers."

The Southern portion of St. Clement's Lane became known in later years as DEADMAN'S LANE, and it is so called in Cockshaw's plan of Leicester dated 1828. But in Combes' map of 1802, which was published in Miss Watts' " Walk through Leicester," the whole of St. Clement's Lane is marked Deadman's Lane."

The ground containing the relic of Roman occupation known as the JEWRY WALL, is frequently referred to in the 14th and 15th century Records as the Holy Bones. It is thought that the district in which it lies was known in the time of the Norman Earls as Jewry, or Jews' quarter, prior to the Charter of 1250 which provided that no Jew should remain in Leicester. Hence the Roman remains were called the Jewry Wall, and the continuation of Blue Boar Lane which passes it became known as JEWRY WALL STREET.

The street still called TALBOT LANE, which runs into Apple Gate from the North, was probably existing in mediæval times. The Talbot Inn, from which it may have taken its name, was standing at the end of the 15th century. Possibly both Lane and Inn were christened after a piece of ground known as the Talbot.

II.

THE SUBURBS.

I. THE NORTH SUBURB.

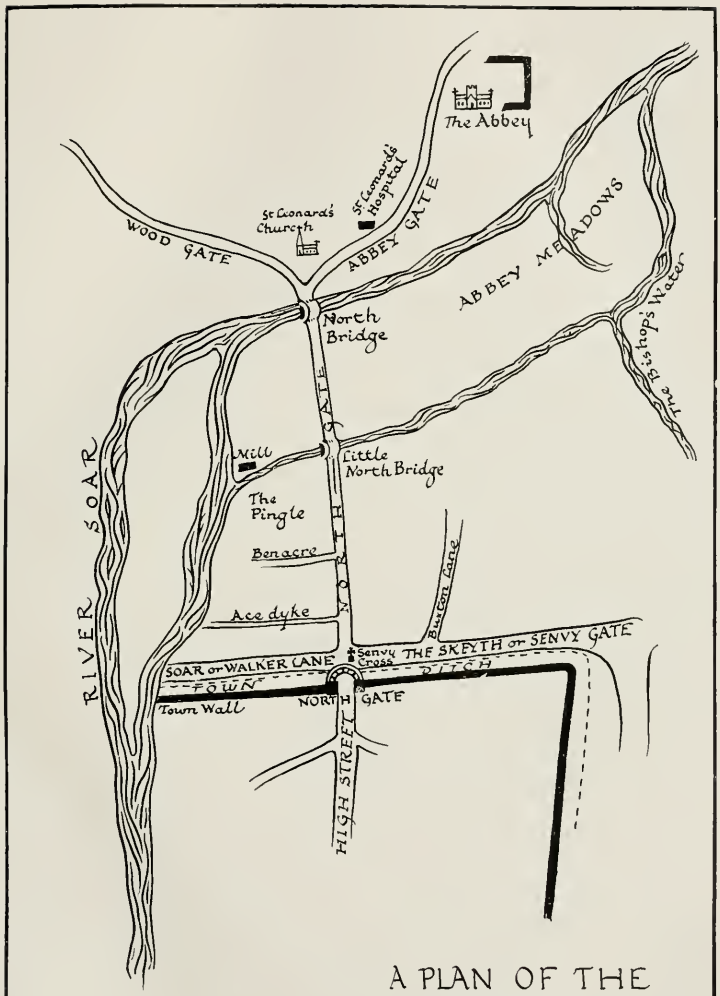
BEYOND the North Gate of mediæval Leicester a suburb was in existence from very early times. It contained the Hospital and Church of St. Leonard, and led up to the great Abbey of St. Mary in the Meadows.

The principal thoroughfares were Northgate, Wood Gate, Abbey Gate, The Skeyth or Senvey Gate, and Soar Lane or Walker Lane.

The road lying beyond the North Gate of Leicester, "the highway which leads to the North Bridge," as it is termed in several documents, was generally known as the NORTHGATE. The road so called was outside the walls of the town, for it was parallel with Buxton Lane, and Buxton Lane is stated to have been without the North Gate. In 1462 it was described as "the King's Highway called le Northgate." During the 13th and 14th centuries the district was occupied mainly by dyers and fullers.

After passing over the little North Bridge, the highroad ran through Frog Island, and crossed the main channel of the Soar by another bridge, which was generally known as the North Bridge. Beyond this point the road divided; one branch turning westwards to the Forest, and the other north towards the Abbey. At the point of divergence stood the Church of St. Leonard. The westward road still retains its old name of WOODGATE, which it is said to have received because it was the way by which wood was brought into the town from the forest; and the other road which led to the Abbey was, and still is called ABBEY GATE. About the year 1323 it was described as "the street of the Abbey of Leicester."

THE SKEYTH, or SENVEY GATE, ran eastward outside the North Gate under the wall of the town. In 1322 it was called Le Skeyth, and in 1392 Senvey Gate, and in a late 15th century lease it was described as "Le Skeyth alias Senvey Gate." In the early years of the 18th century it was still known as



A PLAN OF THE
NORTH SUBURB OF
MEDIAEVAL LEICESTER

Senvey Gate, but it would seem that, in the course of that century, the name was altered to Sanvy Gate, and it appears as Sanvy Gate in maps of 1802 and 1828. Nichols rings the changes on Sanby, Sonvey and " Sanvy, quasi *sanda via*," and endorses the questionable etymology of Bickerstaffe or Carte, who satisfied themselves that the word was a corruption of *sancta* or *sacra via*, denoting the sacred way by which, in pre-reformation years, the great religious processions used to go up to St. Margaret's Church. A stone cross, called Senvey Cross, was standing, in the 16th century, at the end of this road, near the North Gate. It has been suggested that this cross was one of those erected to mark the stages of Queen Eleanor's funeral progress, but the evidence seems against this. It is more likely to have been the Cross which Henry, the third Earl of Lancaster, is said to have put up for the soul of his brother, Thomas, " outside the town of Leicester," but this is mere conjecture.

The Soar Lane " extra portam borialem " ran west, outside the North Gate, down to the river. It was also called Walker Lane, or Fullers' Street. In the year 1298 a member of the important family of Curlevache, when he was " amens et demens et ebrius," walked outside the North Gate down Fullers' Street (" in vico Fullorum ") into the river, and was drowned. In the 14th century it was still known as Walker Gate, or Walker Lane, and was so named in 1417, but, in the course of the 15th century, " Soar Lane " came into use. In 1594 it is referred to as " Soar Lane, or Walker Lane."

Soar Lane does not seem to have run immediately beside the town wall and its ditch ; for in 1392 land was conveyed, which is described as being outside the North Gate in " Walker-crofts," and lying between the town ditch and the common footpath. The ditch and its environs were used as gardens ; and part of this land belonged to the Priory of the Black Friars, whose grounds were intersected by the town wall.

The land in this district was called " Walkercrofts," or " Crofts." It was divided by ditches, and dykes or raised paths, such as Acedyke, or Ash-lane, and the path called Benacre,

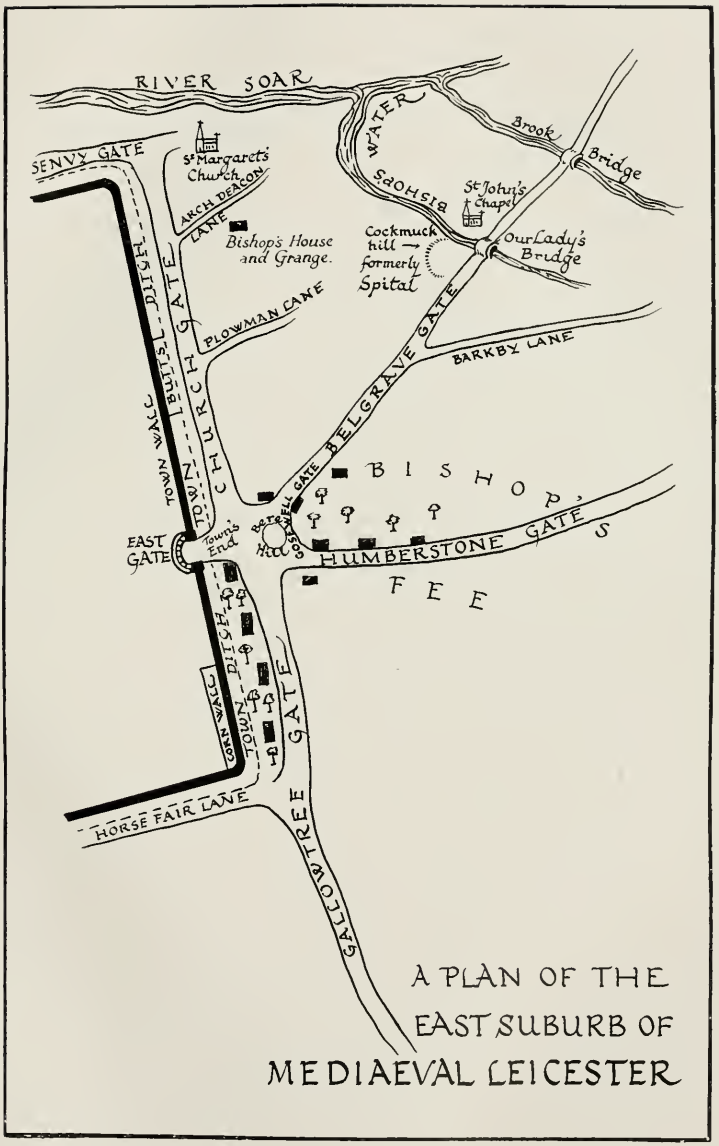
both of which seem to have been parallel with Soar Lane, and to have run down towards the river. There was one large plot of land in Walkercrofts, bounded by these ditches and dykes, which lay between the Northgate and the river, known as the Pingle. Its memory is still preserved by Pingle Street. It was described by Nichols as " a large close on the side of Northgate Street, towards the bottom of Soar Lane, edging on the Soar westward not far from the North Gate," and is marked on most of the old plans of Leicester. The word was used in the Midland Counties to denote any small enclosure, and there were other " pingles " at or near Leicester. One at Nottingham was known as Friars' Pingle, " Le Frere Pyngile." On the eastern side of the North Gate in the Parish of St. Margaret, were other lanes and paths, among which were Buxton Lane, parallel with the highway, and perhaps corresponding in part with what was formerly known as Paradise Lane, and a path over a ridge or dyke, known in the 15th century as " Abbot's balk."

II. THE EAST SUBURB.

The East Suburb, which was far the more important of the two, and was often referred to as " the Suburb," contained the Church of St. Margaret, which was annexed as a Prebend to the Cathedral Church of Lincoln, and the populous districts of Belgravegate and Humberstonegate. Most of the land comprised in the Suburb was the fee of the Bishop of Lincoln, whose Grange lay south of St. Margaret's Church.

The main thoroughfares were Churchgate, Gosewellgate, Belgravegate, Gallowtreegate, and Humberstonegate. Archdeacon Lane, which runs east from Churchgate, a little south of St. Margaret's Church, is mentioned in 1465 ; and Plowman Lane, which also led out of Churchgate, is referred to at the beginning of the 14th century.

Most Churches had a lane of approach, sometimes called the " churchgate," as St. Martin's Lane was called ; but the thoroughfare which came to be, and still is known as CHURCHGATE, *par excellence*, is the road leading to St. Margaret's Church from the south outside the East Wall. A deed of the year 1478


RIVER SOAR
WATER
Brook
Bridge
SENVY GATE
St Margaret's Church
ARCH DEACON LANE
SAOHSIA
St John's Chapel
Bishop's House and Grange.
Cockmuck hill → formerly Spital
Our Lady's Bridge
PLOWMAN LANE
TOWN WALL
BUTTS DITCH
CHURCH GATE
BELGRAVE GATE
BARKBY LANE
BISHOP'S
BOWLING GREEN
BOWSTELL GATE
EAST GATE
Town's End
HUMBERSTONE GATE
S
FEE
TOWN WALL
TOWN DITCH
GALLOWTREE GATE
HORSE FAIR LANE
A PLAN OF THE
EAST SUBURB OF
MEDIAEVAL LEICESTER

relates to land in St. Margaret's Parish, which lay on the west side of " the street called Kyrkegate " ; and that the name was established at the beginning of the 16th century is shown by a benevolence roll of that time, in which the fourth Ward is defined as " Belgravegate on both sides street to the corner fore agaynste Berehill crosse with the Kyrkegate to St. Margaret's Church."

The name GOSEWELLGATE occurs as early as 1302 ; and in the year 1305 a messuage was granted which stood " outside the East Gate in Gosewellgate." In the Leicester Hearth Tax Roll of 1664, Alderman Palmer's Ward is described as comprising " Church Gate from St. Margaret's Church to the Round Hill, Gosewell Gate and Belgrave gate." Hence it may be gathered that Gosewellgate was identical with the Haymarket, lying between the East Gates and Belgrave Gate.

The term GALLOWTREE GATE, or GALTREGATE, was applied to the highway in St. Martin's Parish South of Churchgate. The point of division, the Roundel opposite to the East Gate, is made clear by the boundaries of the old Wards in 1484 and 1557.

The name of the street occurs in the Borough Records, as Gallowtree Gate, Galughtregate, Galowe tre gate, Gaultrygate and Galtregate. In the title deeds of the old Angel Inn it is said to have been named " Gallows Lane." It does not appear ever to have been known as Gartree Gate, which the late Mr. F. T. Mott thought might be its original title. In his opinion it had borne the name of the Hundred, and formed part of the old Roman Road called " Gartree Road." But, apart from the unlikelihood of the word " Gartree " being lengthened into " Gallowtree," the course of the Gartree Road does not seem to have corresponded with Gallowtree Gate. There was a gallows placed on the top of the London Road Hill, above Gallowtree-gate, at the corner of Evington Lane, set upon what was described in 1316 as Galtre " cultura " (a cultivated plot, or *wong*), afterwards known as Gallow-tree or Galltree Hill. Gallowtree Gate, a northern continuation of the same road, might have been

named after this. As Col. G. C. Bellairs has pointed out, it occurs in other places, as " The Gallowtree " at Glasgow.

There was some ground between this road and the town wall and ditch. In 1290 land was conveyed " with the buildings," which stretched " from the highway which is called Gallowtree Gate as far as the walls of Leicester " ; and in 1337 a messuage in Galtregate stretched from " the said street to the town ditch." The space outside the East Gate, where the Clock Tower now stands, and where Church Gate meets Gallowtree Gate, and the roads branch off towards Belgrave and Humberstone, was known as Town's End, Galtregate Town's End or Galtregate End. There stood the Berehill, with a pair of stocks near it. This is mentioned in the Records of the Borough as early as 1260. It was a mound, formerly surmounted by a cross, used for many different purposes, and sometimes called the Roundhill, or Roundel. In 1317 the Mayor complained that Alan of Gissing used to stand with two grooms on the Berehill on Saturdays, waylaying woolfells coming by road, and forestalling them. It was a convenient place for the view of frankpledge for the East Gate, which was held there on the eve of the Epiphany. At the division of Wards in 1484, the fourth Ward began at St. Margaret's Church " unto the corner at the little bridge without the East Gate and Belgrave Gate on both sides unto the corner foryeinst the Berehill Cross." The Berehill adjoined the Haymarket, and it is possible that its name is derived from the word " bere," or barley, and that it was once the site of a market. Mr. Kelly thought that it was used of old as a place for bear and bull baitings, and derived its name from the word *bear*, but this is not very probable. " Bere " is a common name in Devonshire, especially for orchards, and this word seems to be derived from the Saxon *bearu*, a grove of trees—another possible ancestor of our bere-hill. In later days it became known as the Coalhill, " from its being the place where coal was formerly brought for sale in panniers on the backs of horses." In 1493 the Roundel belonged to St. Margaret's Guild.

The cross, after being repaired in 1552, seems to have been pulled down, together with the old wooden cage which stood

beside it, about the year 1575, The cross itself was never replaced, but at a Common Hall, held in 1600, it was agreed " that there shall be a cage presently made and to be set up in the old place," or " in the place called the Barrell Cross or near thereabouts."

In the middle of the 18th century, Assembly Rooms were built on the site. " The building," wrote Mrs. Fielding Johnson, in her " Glimpses of Ancient Leicester," " which had no architectural pretensions, consisted mainly of a large upper room, supported upon columns, and facing the Humberstonegate. The other end, looking towards High Street, was occupied by one or more shops."

BELGRAVEGATE is first mentioned in the published Records of the Borough in the year 1305, when a rent was granted from a messuage outside the East Gate in " Bellgravegate," lying between Richard Norman's land and " the lane which leads to the Earl of Leicester's bakehouse." Belgravegate does not seem to have been within the Bishop's Fee, as Churchgate and Humberstonegate were. The tenants there, in 1322, under the leadership of Richard of Belgrave, certainly made an attempt " to draw the street which is called Belgravegate to the county for making contributions and tallages." But they did not then succeed, for it remained attached to the borough, and was for a long time after included in the borough tallage rolls. In 1478 a messuage " in the East Suburbs of Leicester in the street called Belgravegate," which stretched from the King's highway to the lane called Barkby Lane, was granted to the Borough for an obit. In 1484 the thoroughfare was included in the fourth Ward of the town.

" The street which is called HUMBERSTONEGATE " is mentioned in the Borough Records from 1286 onwards. It belonged to the Bishop's Fee, and the tenants paid taxes with Gartree Hundred, and not with the Borough. It was provided, in 1273, that no one living on the fee of the Bishop might be a Jurat of Leicester. It would appear that the great causeway in Humberstonegate was erected in 1344, when the Earl of Derby, the eldest son of Henry, Earl of Lancaster, sent his serjeant,

Walter of Bintrey, to Leicester " for the lord's business for the repair of ways in Humberstonegate and Belgravegate." The making of the causeway is not mentioned directly in the Mayor's accounts for that year, but they are endorsed in an old hand " Humberstonegate, Great Cawsey there erected."

In the Ward division of 1484, the fifth Ward included the whole of Humberstonegate ; but in the division of 1557 the point in Humberstonegate at which the Ward commenced was more strictly defined. It began " from the bridge by the Antelope." The Antelope was a piece of ground, apparently belonging once to the College of the Newarke, for in 1493 the Guild of Corpus Christi were paying an acknowledgment of 3d. to the New College " for the outshoot " (or drainage) " of the water of the tenement late in the holding of Robert Couper going out through the Antelope." A bridge there is mentioned in 1551 : and in 1566 there was " work at the Antelope for paving and laying of the same bridge." In 1595 " the cawsie beyond Antelope Bridge " was repaired.

— Bishop Penny's Wall —

III.

THE INNS.

IT is commonly asserted that, whereas the use of signs was generally optional, publicans were on a different footing from other traders in this respect. "As early as the 14th century," we are told by the writer on "Signboards" in the Encyclopædia Britannica, "there was a law in England compelling them to exhibit signs, for in 1393 the prosecution of a publican for not doing so is recorded." The reference seems to be to the case of Florence North, a brewer of Chelsea, who was "presented" in that year for not putting up the usual sign. But, whatever may have been the case elsewhere, it does not appear that any regulations of this kind were in force at Leicester before the year 1570. No doubt most of the early taverns would display a bush, or some other kind of sign, but the practice does not seem to have been universal. At any rate in 1570, when there were as many as seventy innkeepers in Leicester, the Governing Body of the town found it necessary to provide "that every common victualler of the town of Leicester shall set forth an outward sign of his or their victualling." This rule was applied in practice only to innkeepers.

The records of the Borough contain no allusion to the signs of inns until the 15th century. In earlier times the hostelries were described by the name of their owner or holder. We are told, for instance, that Sir John Chandos, "Knight of the Earl," was entertained in 1310 at "Stephen Giffard's tavern." And in the following year some of the Earl's household were feasted by the Mayor at the tavern of Roger of Glen, who represented the Borough in Parliament in the years 1301 and 1302. At other times they made use of "Henry le Mercer's tavern," "Simon of the Buttery's tavern," situate near the East Gate, "Walter the Tailor's tavern," "Robert the Porter's tavern," and the taverns of William of Grantham, John Cook, Walter of Bushby, and William Tubbe, who was Mayor in 1363, and who lived in or near the Swinesmarket, the present High Street. Another inn frequently mentioned in the 14th century was kept by a Frenchman, Hugh del Ile, or de Lyle,

who came from Lille, entered the Leicester Guild Merchant in 1345, and kept a tavern somewhere in the North quarter of the town. It may be noted that "Kepegest" occurs as a Leicester surname during the 12th and 13th centuries. The common name for a restaurateur was then keu, cocus, or cook.

During the first three centuries after the Conquest, most of the Leicester inns lay in or close to the old High Street, for at that time, and long afterwards, the life of the community gathered round the High Cross, but as trade increased in volume and importance, the Saturday Marketplace, on the South-East side of the town, became a more populous centre than the High Cross, and during the 15th and 16th centuries many hostelries grew up in that neighbourhood. They were almost, indeed, rendered necessary by the regulations of the Borough, which laid down in the year 1467 that "all men, women, and children that bring horses laden with corn or other victuals to the market shall lead them out of it, as soon as they are unladen, to the inns."

The earliest mention in the Borough Records of sign-bearing inns occurs in the year 1458, when the Chantry of Corpus Christi are said to have received a rent of ten shillings per annum from a certain "hospicium quod vocatur Bell," and also a rent of sixpence per annum "de hospicio quod vocatur Gorge." This ancient hostelry of the Bell was situated in the Swinesmarket, the present High Street, and not on the site of the later hotel of the same name. In October, 1587, as we learn from the Records of the Borough of Nottingham, Richard Wright, of Cambridge, stayed a night at this old inn, and rode off next morning on someone else's horse—unless, indeed, he was speaking the truth, when he told the Nottingham Justices that he had bought it from a man, who lived at Kirby Muxloe, for £3 cash and £1 16s. 4d., "to be paid on this side Easter next." The Bell in the Swinesmarket was still existing in 1605, when the Chamberlains received a rent of ten shillings per annum from Thomas Nurse, butcher, "out of a tenement in the Swinesmarket in his occupation, called the Bell." The George also lay in the Swinesmarket. It was still in the possession of the Corpus Christi Guild in 1519 and 1534. The George, or George and Dragon Inn, existing

in the 17th century, seems to have been situated at the angle of Friar Lane and Hotel Street.

In an undated Subsidy Roll of the 15th century, " the Lord Mungey " (Mountjoy) was taxed for " The Talbot," among lands which lay in the " South and West quarters of Leicester " ; and in 1493 the Chantry of Corpus Christi paid a rent of two shillings to the King for " The Talbot," which they had let for 24 shillings a year, but in that year the name of no tenant was given and it seems to have been unoccupied. According to Miss Bateson, this was the Talbot Inn, which stood from an early date in Talbot Lane. But it was a common fashion to call any small piece of land after some creature whose shape it suggested, and the " Talbot " may perhaps have been such a plot of ground, called after the hound of that name, and both Inn and Lane may have derived their title from the land. Throsby speaks of the Talbot Inn as " the house at the Talbot." It is probable, however, that the Talbot Inn, which was standing in the 16th century in Belgrave Gate, near to the place where the Maypole used to be set up, and which in 1519 belonged to the Corpus Christi Guild, was so designated after the talbot's head that formed the crest of the Belgrave family. The " messuagium vocatum le Pecocke," owned by the same Guild, was probably not an inn, but the piece of land so called which gave its name to Peacock Lane, and to the Peacock Inn, in Southgate Street, that is mentioned in the 18th century. The " Antelope," in Humberstonegate, was also a piece of ground. North concluded from a Tradesman's Token that an Antelope Inn was in existence about 1666, but the sign to which he referred was that of a hart.

More famous than any of these inns is the Blue Boar, situated in the old High Street, at the corner of the lane which led to the Guild Hall. The tragic history of this ancient house is related elsewhere in this volume. It ceased to be used as an inn sometime after the events there mentioned, but remained long in existence, a very beautiful specimen of the domestic architecture of the middle ages, until it was finally destroyed by the hand of man in the year 1836.

The most important of the other 16th century inns seem to have been the ANGEL, the WHITE HART, the BULL'S HEAD, the GREEN DRAGON and the HORSE AND TRUMPET.

The most famous of all Leicester hostelries was the ANGEL, which stood in Cheapside, near the present Victoria Parade, and stretched back to the town wall overlooking Gallowtree Gate. In the year 1534 the Guild of Corpus Christi possessed a " tenement called ye aungell," and it is referred to in the Chamberlains' accounts for 1549. In 1550 " my lord Cromwell and Sir Richard Manners " stayed there, and in the following year the Earl of Shrewsbury ; and from that time onward it accommodated a long succession of notable visitors. A curious statement is made by Nichols, that, in the middle of the 16th century, the Horse and Trumpet Inn was known as the Angel, and was sold, about the year 1558, for £26 13s. 4d. by John Cressey, glover, to John Stanford, butcher. Now it is quite certain that the Horse and Trumpet stood near the High Cross, and also that the historic Angel stood near the East Gate. It was described in 1586 as " l'hostellerie des faulxburgh de l'Ange," so that it evidently lay then on the outskirts of the town. Unless Nichols was mistaken, there must have been an old Angel of the High Cross, which took wing some time between 1558 and 1586 from the centre of the town to the East end, whereupon its former habitation degenerated into the Horse and Trumpet.

Among the distinguished guests of the Angel who are mentioned in the annals of the Corporation, chiefly as receiving civic presents of wine and sugar, may be noticed Henry, the third Marquess of Dorset, Lord Derby, Lord Talbot, Lord Morley (1557) ; Mr. Barker, Chancellor (1560) ; Mr. Day, the Town Preacher, and " another Preacher " (1564) ; Mr. Raven (1565) ; " A Scottysshe beshoppe whiche rode to the Courte in poste "(1568) ; John Hall, Auditor of the Duchy of Lancaster, (1590) ; the Earl of Huntingdon, and the Earl of Shrewsbury (1597) ; Lady Arabella Stuart (1605 and 1608) ; the Princess Elizabeth, eldest daughter of King James I. (1606) ; John Frederick, Prince of Wirtenberg (1608) ; Sir Oliver Cromwell, and " my lord Cavendishe and his lady who lay at the Angell

and dined yesterday at the Abbey with Sir Henry and a sort of gallons that came with them " (1613); Sir William Herrick and his lady, (1622); Prince Charles Louis, son of the Princess Elizabeth of Bohemia, and nephew of Charles I. (1636); the Earl of Arundel (1639); and the Earl of Stamford (1642). The account of the visit of Prince Charles Louis, contained in the Hall Book for 1636, may be worth quoting as an example of civic hospitality. " Upon the twelfth day of August 1636, Ludovicus Prince Palsgrave of the Rhine did dine at the Angell in Leicester, coming from our royal King Charles " (who was then at Tutbury), " to go to Holmby, where the Queen then lay at. The Mayor, Recorder and most of the Four-and-twenty went thither and presented unto him a banquet presently after the meat was taken from his table, which cost £23 and something more; and three gallons of Canary sack, three gallons of Claret, and three gallons of white wine; which was very kindly accepted of by the Prince, and Mr. Mayor, Mr. Recorder, and his brethren most courteously used by him."

The bells of St. Martin's Church were rung sometimes to celebrate the arrival at the Angel of an illustrious visitor, as when the Countess of Huntingdon alighted there at Christmas 1626, and when the Bishop of York arrived in 1630.

Before the Recorder's Chamber was fitted up at the Guildhall in 1582, Mr. Recorder stayed at the Angel, as in 1580; it was also used as the resort of various Commissioners, and for other business purposes. Thus, when there was an invasion scare in 1580, Mr. Mayor and other Justices took wine at the Angel, on meeting there the Justices of the Shire " about the demilances and light horse that certain of the Mayor's brethren by the Council were charged to find." In 1584 Mr. Skevington and Mr. Wensley were at the Angel, " then sitting of a commission for Fenton "; and in 1587 the six Commissioners, who had been appointed to enquire into the decay of houses in Leicester town and the cost of repairing them, dined there on no penurious fare, but on " bread and bear, boyld meat, boyld bef, rost veall, caponettes, rabetes, pygons, frut and ches, wyne and suger, etc." Among the Judges, Mr. Justice Beaumont

lodged at the Angel in 1598, and received from the Corporation a " pottell of claret and a pottell of secke " ; while Mr. Thomas Cave, who was sitting that year " for the subsidy," received there a present of wine and sugar. And in 1609 there is a charge for wine and sugar given to the Justices of the County at their first sitting at the Angel in Leicester " about aide to make the noble Prince Henry, The King's Majesty's eldest son, Knight."

Even men of quality staying in Leicester for the races were entertained at the expense of the town. Thus, in 1603, a gallon of sack and 2 gallons of claret were given to " Sir Thomas Griffyn, Sir William Faunt, and other gentlemen at the Angel at the horse running." During the civil wars the Angel was the scene of great activity. It was probably occupied by Prince Rupert, when, after extracting £500 from the Corporation, he established his headquarters at Leicester in 1642. He had visited the town once before in that year, and received a gallon of white wine, one pottle of claret, one pottle of canary and one pound of sugar. In the Chamberlains' accounts for 1642 the following items refer to his doings : —" Item, paid, which was spent at the Angel by Mr. Mayor's appointment, when the Prince sent in carriages to be guarded by the town.....v.s. od. Item, paid, for a dinner at the Angel for Sir Henry Hungate by Mr. Mayor's appointment, himself and diverse aldermen being then present there.....j.li iiij.s. od.".. Sir Henry Hungate, it will be remembered, was the bearer of Prince Rupert's letter demanding £2,000 from the Leicester Corporation. Again in 1643-44 :—" Item, paid to Mr. Browne for a pottle of sack, one gallon of clarrett and suger which Mr. Mayor gave to the Governer and certaine captaines at the Angell, and by his appointment.....viij.s iiij.d."

After the defeated King had been delivered up to the Parliament, he was taken by the commissioners under a guard to Holdenby House in Northamptonshire, and on his journey thither he passed the night of February 13th, 1647, in Leicester, probably at the Angel, where lodging had been bespoken for him, if necessary. Thompson, in his History of Leicester, says definitely that Charles slept the night at the Angel Inn. His

authority would seem to be a letter bespeaking rooms at that house " if no private house be available." Thompson gives the 12th as the date of the King's visit, but the letter, which is itself dated the 12th, says " He will be here *tomorrow* night." Sixty-one years earlier, another victim of destiny, more pitiable and more innocent than Charles, had stayed at the same hostelry. Mary, Queen of Scots, when she was on the way to her trial at Fotheringay Castle, arrived at Leicester on September 23rd, 1586, and the physician who was in attendance states in his diary that she lodged at the Angel. The Leicester Chamberlains' accounts imply that she remained there two nights.

A year after the visit of Charles, his Conqueror and successor was at Leicester, when the Mayor and Aldermen entertained Lt.-General Cromwell with " wine, biscuits, beare and tabacko," but history does not relate where he lodged.

In the year 1688 a feast was held at the Angel, which was then the house of Mr. Joseph Cradock, the Mayor of the town, in order to celebrate the birth of the Prince of Wales (afterwards known as the Pretender).

When William of Orange and Mary were crowned in April, 1689, the Corporation of Leicester celebrated that joyful event also by dining together at the Angel Inn, and entertaining there, at the expense of the town the neighbouring gentry " and persons of good quality and fashion." In the autumn of the same year another banquet took place, when the Earl of Stamford was entertained " at a feast at the Angel," and the Companies that dined there were paid for at the Corporation's charge, and such gentlemen as he should bring with him, and such other gentlemen and others were allowed every person sixpence apiece in wine. In 1707 the Union with Scotland was celebrated by a civic feast held at the Angel, and in 1715 the first anniversary of the Accession of King George was welcomed by a twelvepenny Ordinary at that Inn. At the celebration of his Coronation, and on the day of Thanksgiving for his Accession to the Throne, the municipal banquets had been held elsewhere on a more lavish scale. Indeed, the great days of the old hostelry were now drawing to a close. It seems to have been demolished some time in the 18th century,

when another building was erected on a portion of the ancient site, occupying the centre of the large court-yard. This edifice remained, bearing the sign of the Angel, until the year 1854, when it finally disappeared. Some twenty-five years ago, it was described by an old inhabitant of Leicester in the following words :—" The front of this inn was in the yard which is now occupied by Morley and Sons. It was a posting Inn, and was occupied by Mrs. Whitehead for many years, her son conducting the business for her. After her death he became the proprietor. The sign, a hanging one, bore the representation of an Angel in vivid colours." The locality of the old hostelry is now pointed out only by the popular name of a partly covered passage from Cheapside to Gallowtree Gate, " the Angel Gateway." One surviving relic of this famous inn is a farthing token, issued in the year 1667 by Nathaniel Baker, which bears on the obverse his name encircling the figure of an angel, and on the reverse " 1667 in Lester "—surrounding his initials N.B. conjoined.

About the year 1894 there was dug up on the site of the old Angel Inn a fragment of stone bearing the Arms of Hastings, Wake, Peveril of Cornwall and another coat.

The White Hart Inn is mentioned in 1547, when Henry Grey, of Bradgate, Marquis of Dorset, stayed there. At the end of the 16th century it belonged to the Herrick family, having been conveyed in 1570, with other property, to John Herrick for the term of 1,000 years for the annual rent of a rose flower. His eldest son, Robert, by his Will, dated 1617, gave the White Hart Inn to Dorcas, one of his nine daughters, who was then unmarried. It was valued in the previous year at £200, " which is well worth it and more," wrote Robert Herrick, in one of his letters. It lay outside the East Gate, and became a favourite place of resort in the early years of the 18th century. When George the First was crowned, in September, 1714, the Corporation of Leicester, after attending St. Martin's Church, and listening to an appropriate sermon, returned to the Town Hall, whence they were " to decently walk to the White Hart to an Ordinary," the Corporation to allow " a bottle of wine between two of all such as shall have tickets that dine, and as much ale

as shall be then necessary." Early in the following year the programme was repeated, a hundred and twenty bottles of wine and a hogshead of ale being specially ordered for the occasion. On the Coronation of George the Second, the Corporation again dined at the White Hart, and celebrated the event with wine " and as much ale as Mr. Mayor should think fit and necessary." When the Assembly Rooms were built in the Haymarket, the White Hart was found a convenient place for fashionable gatherings. After a morning concert, for example, which took place at those Rooms in 1770, two hundred gentlemen adjourned to dine at that inn. In 1779 the Court of Assistants established for the Stockingmakers of Leicester held its sitting in the same building.

A BULL'S HEAD is mentioned as early as 1518, standing near the High Cross. Later, a Bull's Head stood next door to the Green Dragon in the Market Place, " a better house, three stories high, built of red bricks." A " Bull " Inn is mentioned in 1590.

The GREEN DRAGON, which stood opposite the great elm-tree in the Market Place, was probably an Elizabethan building. " It had a gable front, and was white-washed in the last " (18th) " century. The sign was a swing one, and bore the representation of a dragon, painted green." This Inn acquired some notoriety in later days on acount of the murder of its landlord, Fenton, who lies buried, beneath a caustic epitaph, in St. Martin's Churchyard. This epitaph, which reflected on the purity of the law, gave great offence to the authorities, and the Spiritual Court ordered the stone to be removed ; but this order was never executed. The story of Fenton's murder is thus related by a contemporary, William Gardiner :—" Among many persons that were returning to France I met with M. Soulé, who in the year 1778 shot Fenton, the landlord of the Green Dragon in the Market Place, Leicester. This person was not the man upon whom the Frenchman sought to be revenged ; but was the brother of the landlord who had insulted him ; and as it was known he came to challenge him, he was rudely treated by the family. In thrusting him out of doors he drew from his pocket

a pistol, and shot the person that maltreated him." The jury by the direction of the Judge, returned a special verdict grounded on the plea that Soulé, or Soulés (who was a French teacher), went to the house in search of his property (a pistol which Fenton had taken from him). This plea was not allowed by the twelve Judges; but Soulés afterwards received His Majesty's pardon. Nichols' statement, that Soulés was killed by the Paris mob in 1792, is contradicted by Gardiner's account of his meeting the man in 1802.

The Horse and Trumpet was thought by Thompson to have been the large house near the High Cross where the whole of the inmates were killed during the siege of Leicester in 1645. In the following century, however, it seems to have developed Jacobin tendencies, for in the year 1754 the Grand Jury enquired why the persons who drank treasonable toasts at this inn, with the connivance of its landlord, had not been arrested. The popular Horse and Trumpet toast, at the time when Mayor Mitford was standing as the Whig candidate at the Parliamentary election of that year, was "Damnation to King George and Mitford." The house was described by Throsby in 1791 as "a large inn, now occupied as a private house." Afterwards it became a warehouse. It is said that Gabriel Newton, who founded Alderman Newton's School, was at one time master of this house, the signboard of which swung across the street and was attached to the High Cross itself.

The White Horse was in Gallowtree Gate, nearly opposite to the low rambling tavern, called the Magpie, that once stood on part of the site of the modern Victoria Parade. It had a large, swinging sign, which, as I am informed, bore a rhyming inscription, that ran something like this:—

"My White Horse shall beat the Bear,
And make the Angel fly;
He'll turn the Three Tuns upside down,
And drink the Three Cups dry."

In front of this house, in the road near the Causeway, was placed the stone coffin which was traditionally said to be that of Richard III., used as a horse-trough. William Gardiner said

the stone trough, in his time, stood in the stable-yard of the inn. Celia Fiennes, at the end of the 17th century, forgetting the name of the inn, wrote, " I saw a piece of his " (Richard III.'s) " tombstone he lay in, which was cut out in exact form for his body to lie in ; it remains to be seen at the Greyhound in Leicester, but is partly broken." The house at one time belonged to the Leicester Corporation, having been included in the Conveyance to them from the Crown contained in Queen Elizabeth's Charter of 1589, where it is described as " The White Horse in Galtregate alias Galtergate." It flourished for many years, and when it was pulled down in the early part of the 19th century, Mansfield Bank, which afterwards became the Stamford and Spalding Bank, was erected on the site.

Other 16th century inns were the CROSS KEYS, where the Recorder stayed in 1551, where, in 1553, the Queen's Solicitor was regaled with half a fresh salmon and two hundred oysters, and where, in 1589, gifts were sent by the Town Council " to certain players playing upon ropes " ; the STAR, which Mr. Woodall, the Queen's Receiver, visited in 1564, and 1565 ; the FOX, in the North Gate ; the SWAN, in the South Gate, older, probably, than the White Swan in the Market Place, the birth-place of a counterfeited Duke of Monmouth, which was pulled down about 1890 ; the CROWN, situated in the old Swinesmarket ; the CARDINAL'S HAT ; the RED LION, in Southgate Street, which was in its day one of the principal inns in Leicester ; the COCK in Belgrave Gate ; the ancient sign of the SARACEN'S HEAD, fronting the modern Hotel Street, which was demolished in the last century, and rebuilt on its old site ; the HARE AND PHEASANT in the old Swinesmarket, destroyed about 1890, and the MITRE AND KEYS in Applegate Street. In 1509 one John Baker was tenant of a hospice " at the sign of the Lion " in the Parish of St. Peter. This inn may have been the Lion which stood where the sign of the King's Arms afterwards hung till about 1670. Silver Street, the old Sheepmarket, was formerly known as the " street on the backside of the Lion." The ancient inn called the PORTER'S LODGE, at the corner of South and East Bond Streets, was formerly the lodge at one of the entrances to the

Earl of Huntingdon's residence in the Swinesmarket called the Lord's Place. The BIRD-IN-HAND in Red Cross Street, which is comprised in a Corporation rental of 1711, may have been a 16th century inn. The White Lion, still standing, is also an old inn, and so is the Bee-hive near the West Bridge.

The Eastward drift of civic life in Leicester, which has been noticed before, and which was caused not only by the increase of trade in the markets, but by other factors, such as the decline of the Castle, and the dissolution of the great Abbey and of the religious houses that lay within the town west of the old High Street or in its immediate neighbourhood, received further impetus in the 17th century from a very different cause. The course of traffic going from South to North, instead of passing, as formerly, through the town, became deflected outside the East walls. " The road running through Belgrave and terminating in Belgrave Gate at the Clock Tower, owes its existence as a main entrance into the town to one of the visitations of the Plague. The original road from the North turned off at the bottom of Birstall Hill, some two miles from the Clock Tower, and, passing the Abbey, entered the town by the North Gate, and emerged again at the South Gate. But fear of the Plague led travellers to take a side road by Belgrave as a preferable alternative, as by so doing they could pass by the old town, bounded by its four walls, without actually entering it on their way to the South or North. Hence it came into general use."

The visitation of the Plague referred to is that of 1669, but long before that time the flow of traffic must have been turned outside the walls, owing to precautions taken by the Leicester authorities to protect their town from the infection of the Plague which raged in London and elsewhere. As early as the year 1624 watchmen were appointed " to keep Londoners out of the town during the plague there " ; and in the following year it was ordered that " no inhabitant should lodge any person coming from London or other place infected with the plague without consent of Mr. Mayor or the Aldermen of the Ward ; neither shall receive or send any wares from London or other place infected without the like consent." In 1631 a considerable sum

of money was paid " to keep Loughborough people forth of the town " ; and the charges incurred in 1641 " in watching to keep the sickness from Leicester which prevails at Thurmaston, Birstall, Whetstone and Oakham," were no less than £46 8s. 7d. The gates and bridges were kept locked and chained. All these measures, preventing travellers from entering the town, must have furthered the use of the thoroughfare lying East of its walls ; and the more important inns began to open their doors outside the ancient borough, in the neighbourhood of the present Clock Tower. The advent of the diligence about 1760, and the mail-coach, which reached Leicester in 1785, brought increased prosperity to the large hostelries which lay about that new centre.

The most celebrated of the coaching houses, besides the old White Horse, were the THREE CROWNS, the THREE CRANES, the LION AND LAMB, the NAG'S HEAD, the GOLDEN LION, the SWAN WITH TWO NECKS, the QUEEN'S HEAD, the LION AND DOLPHIN, and the BELL.

The THREE CROWNS, which stood on the site of the National Provincial Bank, was built about the year 1726, and was named after the union of the three crowns of England, Scotland and Hanover, which was effected by the accession of George I. It was a large building " extending a long way up Horsefair Street. It was three storeys high, containing about fifty windows, plastered and painted stone colour on the front. Its entrance faced down Gallowtree Gate, and its gateway into the yard in Granby Street. It had a balcony on the front entrance, where addresses were delivered at the time of elections. The sign hung at the corner of the house, bearing on it three crowns, and a sceptre in gilt. The house in Horsefair Street was guarded with posts and rails, and at the end of them was a Town Pump." The Three Crowns was one of the social headquarters of the Leicester Whigs, the other being its neighbour the Three Cranes ; while the revolutionary and dissenting spirits used to assemble at the Lion and Lamb, the Bear and Swan, the Horse and Trumpet and the White Lion ; although the last inn was selected in 1665 for a banquet that was presented by the Mayor to Captain Bassett, Commander of His Majesty's Own Troop.

In 1745 the Corporation were sufficiently Hanoverian to hold their Venison Feast at the Three Crowns, and in the following year they met there to express by a banquet their thankfulness at the quelling of the late Rebellion. The Constitutional Society, which was formed in 1789 as a countermeasure to the Revolution Club, there enjoyed some of its dinners. Various business meetings were also held there, connected with the woollen manufactures, the circulation of base coin, the sale of the Town Gates in 1774, and the Leicester Navigation in 1791. William Gardiner offers us a casual glance through the windows of this inn at the close of the 18th century, which permits us to catch sight of the Duc de Chartres, the father of King Louis Philippe, who happened to be staying there at that time, having come to Leicester to hunt with the Prince of Wales. On hearing the sound of music, coming from some local amateurs who were engaged in singing glees and catches, " he was curious enough to enter the room, and remain a short time as an auditor." In 1801 the annual meeting of the subscribers to the Leicester Permanent Library was held at the Three Crowns, " dinner on the table at half-past two."

The most important rival of the Three Crowns in the affection of Hanoverians was the Three Cranes, which stood nearly facing it on the Eastern side of Gallowtree Gate.

Although the THREE CRANES was a favourite sign in London, the original name of this house seems to have been the Crane. It is so called in 1730 and in 1754. In 1759 and 1762 it is described as the Cranes, but thereafter it is usually named the Three Cranes, except in an official poster, where it appears as " The Cranes Inn." Possibly the Cranes became multiplied to match the number of Crowns over the way. It was from this house that one of the earliest of the Leicester mailcoaches began to run in 1764, the Flying Machine, which left Leicester at 2 a.m. and was timed to arrive at London the same night. The Venison Feast, and the Constitutional Society's dinners were held here from time to time, on one occasion as many as 900 persons sitting down " at the Cranes and Crowns." It is more worthy of record that a meeting was held at the Three Crowns

in 1766, at which a resolution was adopted for the formation of an Infirmary at Leicester, and in 1771, when that institution was opened, the gentlemen dined at the Three Cranes and the ladies at the Three Crowns. The Cranes also witnessed in the year 1791 the birth of the Literary Society, which first brought forward the idea of establishing a Permanent Library in the town of Leicester.

One or two of the more illustrious visitors of the Cranes may be mentioned. It is doubtful if that epithet can be applied to " two princes of Mount Lybanus in Syria," whose charges were defrayed by the Corporation, and who received from the Town a present of ten guineas and an armed escort to Coventry. In 1768 the Cranes had a royal guest of more consequence. On the morning of Sunday, September 3rd, a carriage drove up to the door, and " a traveller stepped out of it into the principal parlour of that establishment. Walking to the window, the stranger threw up the sash, showed himself, and bowed with affability and condescension to the people assembled. He was about the middle size ; he had light hair and a fair complexion. He was dressed in a light drab coat and blue waistcoat edged with silver, wearing on his breast a star and the ensigns of the Order of the Elephant. This was the King of Denmark, the unworthy husband of George the Third's youngest sister. Part of the Regiment of Horse Guards Blue were drawn up opposite to the Three Cranes to receive His Majesty, who called to the officer on guard, and conversed familiarly with him for several minutes." The Blues, it appears, were on several occasions quartered at Leicester, and their officers lodged at the Cranes. A few years after this episode a more romantic visit took place. " On Tuesday, May the 18th, Lord Townshend, accompanied by a gentleman and several servants, came to the Cranes Inn and remained there all that day and the day following. Lord Townshend sent expresses in different directions, and numerous were the conjectures as to the motives of his lordship's visit to Leicester. On Wednesday four postchaises arrived at the inn, bringing several ladies and two gentlemen, one of the former being young and exceedingly beautiful. After dining at the

Cranes they all set out for the metropolis. In a day or two the London Evening Post cleared up all the mystery by making the following announcement: "Yesterday Lord Townshend was married to Miss Mountgomery. She is said to be about 17, and his lordship about 50 years of age."

The landlord of the Three Cranes, about this time, who was named Oliver, was Mayor of Leicester in the year 1762, and is remembered as the builder of the first house in Stoneygate and of the mansion on the hill at Birstall to which he retired.

Facing the Three Cranes on the other side of Horsefair Street stood the LION AND LAMB, whose biblical sign, alluding to the lion of the millennium, suggests a Puritanical origin. This inn became, at any rate in the latter years of the 18th century, a strong nucleus of dissent. There the Revolution Club held their fortnightly meetings, and there ministers met in 1789 and in the following year, to endeavour to obtain the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, and to secure religious freedom. When the Revolution Club celebrated the hundredth anniversary of the landing of William of Orange, there were as many as 672 diners at the Lion and Lamb and two other inns.

The Manchester and London coaches, which commenced running in 1777, used to stop for the night at Leicester, at the Inn known as the SWAN WITH TWO NECKS. This thirsty bird makes a fine Pantagruelian sign, and it is quite a mistake to suppose, as some do, that its name is derived from the two nicks, or notches, cut in the swan's bill to distinguish its ownership. This popular derivation is negatived by the consideration that these nicks were so small that they would not be perceptible on a signboard. The NAG'S HEAD was not demolished until 1876. It stood at the junction of the old High Street with Town Hall Lane. An illustration of this picturesque old building is given in Mrs. Fielding Johnson's "Glimpses of Ancient Leicester." The date 1663 was over its porch. The GOLDEN LION stood at the corner of the old High Street and Thornton Lane. The QUEEN'S HEAD, which displayed its sign in Town Hall Lane, at the east end of St. Martin's Church, was, in all probability, the house from the gateway of which the first stage

coaches started from Leicester to Nottingham and London. It was probably the same house and the same sign as the Maiden Head, which is mentioned in the Chamberlains' Accounts for 1591-2. " Recd. of Wm. Hobbye for a messuage or tent. with the appurtenances called the Maydenheadd and a garden thereunto belonging lying on the East syde of St. M'tyn's Churche in his occupation." The Maiden Head is said to have been adopted as a sign by many inns in compliment to Queen Catharine Parr, the last wife of Henry VIII., whose family bore for a crest, " a female's head, coup'd below the shoulders, habited az. on her head a wreath of roses alternatively ar. and gu."

The Lion and Dolphin stood in the Market Place, and coaches used to start from its doors for London, running through Northampton, St. Albans and Barnet. These Post-coaches with postilions " on a new plan," commenced running in 1765, leaving London every Monday, Wednesday and Saturday mornings at four o'clock, and starting from the Lion and Dolphin on the return journey at the same hour on the same days.

At the end of the 18th century the Bell in Humberstone Gate was a great coaching house. Every morning the London stage-coach started from its doors, and another coach used to leave three times weekly for Derby, Buxton and Manchester. It was the rendezvous of the Whigs during the unsuccessful candidature of Major Mitford in 1754, on which occasion the windows of the Three Crowns and the Lion and Lamb were broken by riotous mobs. The inn at that time seems to have been sometimes known as the " Blue Bell," for one of the popular election rhymes which were then being sung at Leicester began thus :—

" As I was going to the Blue Bell
I met Major Mitford going to hell."

A tragedy which befell a few years later, when John Douglas, then landlord of the Bell Hotel, was tried, condemned and executed for a highway robbery committed some years before, is related in Thompson's " History of Leicester in the Eighteenth Century."

Few Leicester hostelries have found a place in Literature, but the Bell has acquired fame as the inn at which Drunken Barnaby was lodging, when he received such a severe lesson from the watchmen of Leicester :—

" Veni Leicester ad Campanam,
Ubi mentem laesi sanam ;
Prima nocte mille modis
Flagellarunt me custodes,
Pelle sparsi sunt livores,
Meos castigare mores."

Perhaps, however, it was at the old Bell in the Swinesmarket that Barnaby put up. His visit to Leicester must have taken place some time before 1638, for it was in that year that his Journal first appeared, and the Swinesmarket Bell was certainly existing, as we have seen, as late as 1605.

The history of the old inns of Leicester can be sketched only in the barest outline. Wider research might, no doubt, discover many more interesting allusions to their ancient life, but their doings must remain for the most part closed in darkness, and the cheerful clatter of their busy days is now silent for ever.

IV.

THE PRISONS.

I. THE EARL'S PRISON.

THE most ancient of the mediaeval prisons of Leicester was the Castle Dungeon. The partly subterraneous room, which still exists between the Mount and the Hall of the Castle, and which has long been known as "John o' Gaunt's Cellar," has been generally identified with this venerable gaol. A very full and illustrated description of it will be found in James Thompson's account of Leicester Castle, published in 1859. He describes it as a long, dark and damp chamber, the sides and roof of which are constructed of wrought stones. "It is fifty feet from end to end, eighteen feet wide, and twelve feet high from the original floor, now covered over with accumulated earth and rubbish." Thompson came to the conclusion that the walls of the chamber were older than the ceiling, and he conjectured that at some time, not earlier than the middle of the 15th century, an upper room had been built over the original building, probably a guard-room. "But, whatever it may have been," he continues, "the chamber below was evidently a prison, and I doubt not was that erected under the authority of Edward the First, whose grant, dated 1301, is entitled 'De prisona in villa Leicestriae constructend' pro prisona comitatus qui ante usque gaolam Warwici duci "solebant.'"

It is not, however, at all certain that the existing building was really the dungeon of the Castle, as Thompson believed. Other antiquarians, who have studied the character of the structure, and compared it with similar underground places in other castles of the period, have come to an opposite conclusion. They think that it was not built for a prison, but more probably as a cellar for the storage of wine and other domestic supplies.*

* Mr. A. Hamilton Thompson writes: "The 'dungeon' was certainly the cellar at the kitchen end of the great hall." See post, p. 201.

However this may be, there can be little doubt that Thompson was mistaken in supposing that the Castle dungeon was erected under the grant of Edward the First, for it was in use long before 1309, when Edward the First's prison was finished. One man is recorded to have escaped from the " prisona castri Leycestriae " in 1298, and another in 1300. In 1305 the assistant of the keeper of the prison of Lord Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, of the Castle of Leicester, going to visit some prisoners that were in the said prison of his lord, " raised the iron door of the prison, that he might see the prisoners safely, and accidentally tripped against the iron door, so that he fell to the bottom of the said prison, and broke his neck." Further escapes from the Castle dungeon occurred in 1309 and 1318. It was clearly therefore not the prison ordered by King Edward, which indeed, as we shall see, was a county gaol.

The prisoners taken to the Castle dungeon were the Earl's men who were not Leicester men. The Earl had power to seize and hang and confiscate the goods of all thieves caught within his territory. Thus, in 1298, Gilbert Makeleys, of Houghton, " taken on the Earl's liberty in the town of Houghton," was put into the Castle prison. After the new county gaol had been built in 1309, such persons continued to be incarcerated in the Castle gaol. Thus, in the year 1323, a man taken at Stretton-in-the-Street, in Warwickshire, with a stolen bullock, was taken " to the prison of the Castle of Leicester."

II. THE KING'S PRISON, OR COUNTY GAOL.

Until the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the counties of Warwick and Leicester were in the charge of one Sheriff, and Leicestershire prisoners at one time were sent, as a rule, to the gaol at Warwick, but tried in the shirecourt which was held at Leicester. Thus prisoners are recorded to have been sent to Warwick gaol from Leicester in 1297 and 1300. The inconvenience of this arrangement was felt and remedied long before a separate Sheriff was appointed for Leicestershire in 1566. Indeed, it was this object which Edward the First had in view when he ordered a prison to be built at Leicester. It was finished eight years later,

for in August, 1309, his son Edward the Second, being then at Stamford, sent letters to the Sheriff, signifying that, whereas the late king, Edward, his father, " for the more convenience of the inhabitants of Leicestershire, had, with the consent of Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, ordained that a public prison should be made in the town of Leicester, for the safe keeping of all prisoners taken within the said county ; " and that, whereas he himself, after the death of his said father, had " by his writ commanded that the said prison, then not wholly finished, should be forthwith completely perfected, so that no prisoner should thenceforth be carried out of the said county of Leicester (as until then was the custom), to the prison at Warwick ; " and that whereas he was now credibly given to understand that the said prison was at length accordingly finished ; he therefore required " that the said sheriff should cause all such prisoners as should be thenceforth apprehended in the county of Leicester to be safely brought and kept in the said new prison at Leicester until they should thence be delivered in due course."

Four years after this prison was finished, a remarkable thing happened to one of the prisoners. Matthew of Enderby, a thief, who had been caught and taken " ad prisonam domini Regis Leycestriae," was convicted of larceny, and hanged. His body was then borne to the graveyard of the chapel of the hospital of St. John of Leicester, and, while it lay there, awaiting burial, the man came to life again. Such an event as this is an unusually bright spot in the annals of a prison, the dullness of which is relieved, as a rule, only by reports of prisoners' escapes. Many broke out of the county gaol, as they did also from the Castle dungeon and from the town prison. For instance, Elias of Staunton, approver, " broke the King's gaol at Leicester " in the year 1317, and fled for sanctuary to All Saints' Church. Next year a man escaped from the same prison to St. Peter's Church.

In the time of Edward the Second it was ordered, " with the assent of the commonalty," that a hall should be built beyond the county prison, for delivery of prisoners and holding of pleas in. There was, however, some delay in the building of this

hall, during which the old Mayor's hall in Blue Boar Lane was used as a court of justice. An interesting report will be found in the Calendar of Patent Rolls of Edward III. 1330-1334, of a Commission, granted April 1st, 1332, " on petition of the commonalty of the county of Leicester," which accounts for this delay. It appears that " divers sums of money " had been assessed, for the purpose of building a shirehall, on the townships of the county, " and collectors of the same appointed ; but that, although the timber of the hall had been got together out of such assessment, the hall itself was still without a roof and unfinished, because the collectors had kept a great part of the money raised in their own hands." Richard of Egebaston and Robert of Gadesby were therefore appointed " to audit the accounts of the said collectors, to distrain for all arrears, and to complete the work." The names of the delinquent collectors are not disclosed.

The Shirehall appears to have adjoined the garden of St. John's Hospital, for in the Corpus Christi Guild's rental for 1494-5 is a rent " pro uno gardino juxta le Shirehall nuper Sancti Johannis Baptistae Leycestriae " ; and in the 17th century a Leicester garden was known as " the Shirehall close." King Edward's prison lay close to the Shirehall, probably north of the Hospital. How long it continued in use is uncertain, but towards the close of the 16th century it seems to have been replaced by another building, erected lower down the old High Street immediately south of Free School Lane. But the new gaol was little better than the old. A prisoner who was interned there in 1690 described it as " a low, moist dungeon " ; and, nearly a hundred years later, John Howard, the philanthropist, visited it twice, and gave a lamentable account of its condition. The debtors' sick-ward was actually in the *cellar*, a dungeon 29½ feet by 9, and 6 ft. 8 in. high, down seven steps, and damp, with two windows, the largest about 15 inches square. The day and night rooms of the felons were close and offensive dungeons, from 5 to 7 steps underground. It is not surprising that Howard condemned this accommodation as " not convenient or healthy." Owing mainly, no doubt, to his representa-

tions, the prison was pulled down within a few years of his last visit, and a new County Gaol was then built on the site of the old one. This building, which cost £6,000, was first inhabited in 1793, and one of its earliest occupants is said to have been George Moneypenny, its architect, who thus became a victim of his own handiwork, like the more celebrated artist Perillus.

The present gaol in the Welford Road was built in 1828, and from that time the county gaol in Highcross Street continued in use as a town prison. It was demolished about the year 1880.

III. THE TOWN PRISON.

It would appear that the guarding of prisoners taken within the town and suburbs of Leicester at one time belonged to the Earl's bailiffs. But in the course of the 14th century, as the community grew in power, they claimed to keep their own prisoners. In the year 1375 they obtained from John of Gaunt a formal recognition of their right to do so. They did, however, actually use a prison of their own long before this charter was granted, for a town prison, "prisona villae Leycestriae," is mentioned as early as 1297, and in the opening years of the 14th century we frequently read of prisoners being taken to the "town prison," or escaping from it. Indeed, the Mayor of Leicester, in his account for the year 1323, takes credit for materials and labour which were used "for making the prison in the High Street." The amount expended (two shillings), is so small that the entry cannot relate to any new building, but perhaps indicates that a house already existing was repaired or adapted to hold prisoners. It may be concluded that some building standing in the old High Street, was in use as a prison at the beginning of the 14th century or earlier.

After the Reformation a new town prison was built on the site of the Chapel of St. John's Hospital, at the corner of the old High Street and St. John's Lane, afterwards Causeway Lane. Thompson gives the date of its erection as 1614. Writing about 1791, Throsby said that it was at that time "a despicable place," and "beneath description." Another building was erected on

the same site in 1792, when the foundations of the ancient chapel were discovered. This building remained in use as the Town Gaol until 1828. Nine years after that date it was demolished and some small houses put up where it had been.

IV. THE OLD MAYOR'S HALL.

After their purchase of the Hall of the Corpus Christi Guild in 1563, the Corporation made use of the old Mayor's Hall, in Blue Boar Lane, partly as a coal store, and partly as a prison. In 1573 a stone wall was built, to divide the prisoners from the coals. But long before that time the old hall had been used for the reception of prisoners. It was enacted in 1511 that the Mayor's serjeant should have " of every prisoner committed to the hall for a fray, 4d., and of every prisoner so committed for any other trespass, 2d. in name of a fee, to mend his wages." Eleven years afterwards, all trespassers that were committed for punishment " to Mr. Mayor's Hall," were required to take their victuals of the serjeant, " except men's " (*i.e.*, freemen's) " sons and apprentices." Members of the governing body of the town who committed offences were punished by some kind of imprisonment in the old hall, but in the year 1580 a resolution was passed, whereby it was provided that in future " such of the 48 as shall hereafter so offend as he or they shall deserve punishment shall be punished at the new hall and no more of that company from henceforth to be punished at the old hall. But it shall be at Mr. Mayor's pleasure whether the hall door shall be locked upon any such offender or not."

V. THE GAINSBOROUGH.

It is said by Thompson that the Gainsborough had been used as a prison and court of justice as early as the reign of Henry the Seventh, and perhaps before that time. It is not mentioned, however, in the published Records of the Borough until the year 1533, when a charge was preferred of using seditious language " in a place called Geynysborow chambere standyng on the market place called Saturday Market in Leicester." It was in use as a prison in 1550.

The Gainsborough was a two storey building erected in the Market Place, a little to the east of the spot on which the present Market House stands. It comprised an upper room, where the justices met both for business and also for pleasant carousing. Beneath the balcony which projected from this chamber on the southern side were some shops, let off to shoemakers, and there was a dungeon below the ground. A servant of Sir Edward Hastings, who was interned there in Queen Mary's reign, expressed his feelings thus :—" Immediately as we were come to Leycetter Master Mayor sent me forthwith to a most vile prison called Gaynsborrow, and then offered to put gyves and fetters upon my legs, and so to lye upon hard planks without bed or straw and without company or comfort."

In 1575 the Deputy Receiver of the Duchy of Lancaster contributed 33s. 6d. " towards the reparacions of Gainsborough Chamber." The Town Chamberlains' Accounts contain several references to meetings held there, such as the following :— " Sheriffs and Justices in Geynsborow chambre," and " Sir Edward Hastings and other of the Justices in Gaynesborowe Chambre sittinge there with Mr. Mayor uppon the Councill's Lettres aboute corne." In 1566 the Mayor made an appointment to meet strangers there, and in 1588 the Chamberlains paid 9 shillings " for a weynescott cheyre remeyninge in Gaynesburye chamber for the Mayor to sytt in by the fyer."

Standing as it did in the most frequented open space of the town, the Gainsborough was far more in evidence than the Town Hall, and even than the High Cross, so that it became a favourite place for demonstrations of all kinds. Thus, a certain Isabel Slater, who had been convicted by the Magistrates, was condemned (*inter alia*) to be carted about the town in a white sheet and after that to stand up " openly in the open market before the chamber called the Gainsborough Chamber in a white sheet by the space of one hour, between the hours of xi and xii of the clock." When Queen Elizabeth died in 1603, her death was proclaimed both at the High Cross and at the Gainsborough. The accessions of Charles I. and Charles II. were also proclaimed at the same places. The building suffered during the tumults

of the civil war, for in 1643 the Chamberlains paid 2s. 8d. " for timber and workmanshipp about the chimney at Gainsborow beinge burnt down by the soldiers."

In 1697 the peace of Ryswick was celebrated at Leicester by a bonfire made in the Marketplace near the Gainsborough, and a hogshead of ale was ordered for the people at the public expense. Again, when the news of the Duke of Marlborough's victories in 1704 reached Leicester, the Corporation ordered such a collation and treat to be made at the Gainsborough as Mr. Mayor should think fit, the charges to be paid by the Chamberlains. Bonfires and feastings and public ale drinking followed each success. After the victories in Brabant in 1706 a great public entertainment took place at the Gainsborough. In the previous year the room had been redecorated, and the Queen's arms and other coats there freshly drawn, to which were then added the Earl of Denbigh's. Indeed, the Gainsborough was largely given up to civic festivals. The coronation of George the First was observed with great rejoicing, and " so much ale and wine at night at the Gainsborough as Mr. Mayor should think fit, with bonfires and other demonstrations suitable to the occasion." A similar entertainment—with the addition of tobacco—was provided at the Gainsborough on the proclamation of Peace with Spain, and in the following year the coronation of George the Second was celebrated with equal fervour.

The last of these jubilations took place in 1747, when the naval victories of Anson and Warren were recognised in the usual manner. At the beginning of the following year the Corporation ordered that the Gainsborough and adjoining buildings should be taken down. They were at that time, as Nichols said, " miserably inconvenient." It was resolved, therefore, that " Humphrey Whorstall's house, Coker's kitchen, the Guardhouse and the Piazza, be all pulled down, and a new Gainsborough built on or near as conveniently may be to the place where those buildings stand, according to the plan delivered in by Mr. Mayor at the last Hall ; and that the shambles and shops in the Saturday Market be likewise pulled down and a

new shambles with a vault under them be made under the said Gainsborough." The new building was known as the Exchange, and was in existence until 1850.

There was a room under the Toll-booth, in the Market Place, which was sometimes used as a house of detention; and the wooden Cage, a lock-up for petty malefactors, stood at the Berehill Cross, outside the East Gate.

The town possessed at least eight pairs of Stocks, which stood outside each of the four Gates, at the High Cross, outside the Mayor's Hall, under the Pillory, and beneath the great Elmtree, in the Marketplace. Besides the Marketplace Pillory there may have been one placed on the top of the Berehill Cage, as in the case of the Cornhill Pillory in London. A Pillory is recorded to have been made at Leicester in 1300, but there had been older ones.

V.

THE TOWN HALLS.

I.

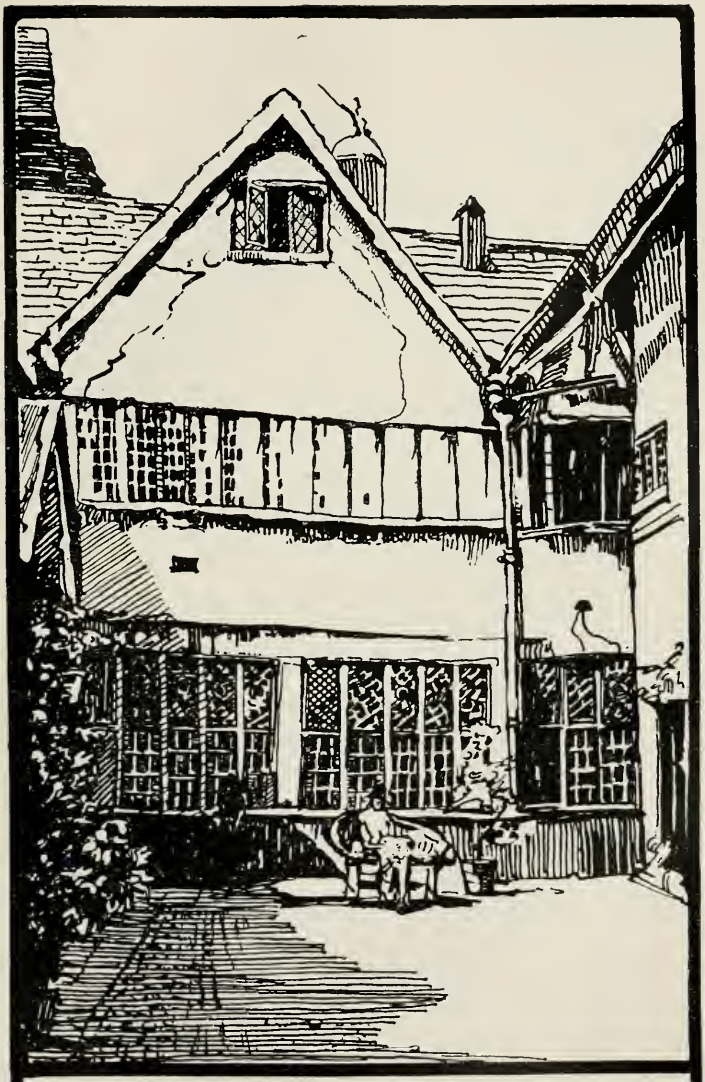
VERY little is known about the first house occupied by the Guild Merchant of Leicester. It was situated in the Parish of St. Nicholas, and " with the unanimous consent of the community " it was conveyed away to one William Emery by Walter le Bron, who was Mayor of Leicester in 1275-6.

In the year 1257, Isolda the Turner was paid 1s. 7d. " for arrears of the service of the messuage belonging to the community of the Guild." In 1258, a like sum was paid to Philip the Turner, " for rent of the land of the Guild." In 1260 Philip, son of Philip the Turner, received 1s. 7d. " of his annual rent from the messuage of the Guild in the Parish of St. Nicholas." Further payments of " the Guild house rent " were made to Philip the Turner in 1261, 1262 and 1264.

That these payments represented a rent issuing out of the first house belonging to the Guild is rendered practically certain by an entry made in the Pleas of the Guild Merchant for 1335-6, wherein, after a note declaring that " Walter Brown, formerly Mayor of Leicester," conveyed away " veteram aulam Gylde," it is further stated that William the Turner then claimed to have " 1s. 6d. and two capons from the old Guildhall—de *vetere* Guildhall." Hence it appears that the rent paid to the Turner family was a charge upon the old house of the Guild that was conveyed away about 1275. The Turners' claim is not again referred to in the Records of the Guild.

II.

Some years before parting with their first hall, the Guild Merchants had been anxious to obtain better accommodation. They were, however, very poor, and quite unable to establish any precedent of lavish expenditure upon municipal buildings. On the contrary, they appear to have looked round for some



Old Guild Hall

dilapidated building which they could buy cheaply, and afterwards make suitable for their purpose, as soon as they should have funds to spare. And so, about the year 1251, they bargained with one William Ordriz for the purchase of a house, formerly belonging to his father Stephen, the son of Ivo, which stood at a certain corner opposite the churchyard of St. Nicholas. This house was conveyed to "the Mayor and Burgesses and Commune of Leicester and their successors," in consideration of the payment of 6½ marks of silver (£4 6s. 8d.), and a yearly rent of 16 pence and two capons, "to wit, at Candlemas five pence, at Whitsuntide five pence, at Michaelmas six pence, at Christmas two capons." By subsequent deeds these annual services were released, and in consideration of 2 marks (£1 6s. 8d.) the mother of William Ordriz released her right of dower.

The new Guild Hall lay in what is now called Blue Boar Lane, opposite to the Eastern end of the Church of St. Nicholas, where Simon's Almshouse afterwards stood. For some years after its purchase by the Guild there is no indication of their occupying it. On the other hand, in the year 1258 they paid a shilling to one Robert Griffin for hire of a house to hold the Morning-speeches in. It seems to have been in a somewhat ruinous and neglected condition, for three years later Robert of the Dovecote was fined a shilling for taking freestones without license from the hall of the Guild, and "carrying them to his own house to do with them what he liked to the damage and dishonour of the Guild and of the Community of Leicester." Thirty years later we find this same Robert of the Dovecote selling stones illegally taken from the town wall to a Canon of Leicester Abbey, who confessed that he bought the stone "foreknowing that it was from the town wall." There seems to be no record of the Guild meeting in their new hall until March, 1276, but the building had been restored a year or two before. In 1274, Alexander le Debonair, who was Mayor of Leicester from 1270 to 1275, "rendered an account of the Guild-hall of £6 9s. 3d. in the presence of the Community." "Tantum aula

custavit in omnibus," says the Record, " The hall cost so much altogether."

There is in existence the fragment of an account relating to expenses incurred in the building of the Guildhall, which seems to refer to this period. In this account the sums spent between Candlemas and July amount to rather less than £4. The rest of the document is torn away, but the fragment has a good claim to be admitted as part of the 1274 account. It will be noticed that the whole amount spent upon the site and building of this hall was £12 2s. 7d. The cost of building the present Town Hall, exclusive of the site, was £52,911 2s. 8d. The contrast is striking, after every allowance is made for the depreciation of money. But it may perhaps be said that it was the earlier builders who laid the foundations of this later and more ambitious enterprise, and in that sense " they builded better than they knew," or at any rate more expensively.

After the reconstruction of the building, it was occupied by the Guild Merchant, and used as their Guildhall for nearly a hundred years. The site is said to have comprised 20 yards and 1 foot in length, 9 yards in breadth at the East End, and 7 on the West. The building had a gabled roof, and consisted of a porch, a hall on the ground floor, and a large Solar, or Upper Chamber, which hung over the street, and sheltered four shops or market booths. These booths were let out by the Guild, at a rental of 4s. a year, from 1309 until 1346, after which date their use was presumably discontinued, as no later payments are mentioned.

The building appears to have been of moderate size. Throsby must have exaggerated in calling it " a place of considerable magnitude." Anyone who is acquainted with the average pitch of a 13th century roof, and also with the size of 13th century tiling slates, could perhaps make a rough estimate of the dimensions of the Upper Chamber based upon the number of slates, two and a half thousand, which were used in tiling the roof. These slates would be the famous blue slates of Swithland which have been quarried from time immemorial, and which covered the roof of the neighbouring Blue Boar Inn.

Adjoining the house was a garden, called in the 14th century " the garden of the Moot-hall," and in the 15th " the Town-Hall garden." This garden was walled round, and it was not large, for the wages of two Wall-builders for $3\frac{1}{2}$ days at $3\frac{1}{2}$d. a day, and two more for $1\frac{1}{2}$ days at 1s., with straw and water, which cost 1s. 4d., brought the whole cost of the wall to no more than 3s. 11d.

The street, now called Blue Boar Lane, which led to the hall was generally described in the 13th and 14th centuries as " the lane which leads from the High Street to the Moot-hall," or " Guildhall," and in 1484 it was called Mayor's Hall Lane. It was paved in the year 1341, when " eight rods of pavement were paved by task " for 8d.

The Guild Hall was very simply furnished. Both hall and Upper Chamber were provided with wooden benches, some of which were, on special occasions, covered with mats. These benches often needed repair, and once, in the year 1334, reference is made to some riotous proceedings, otherwise unknown to history, in order to account for the damage. The Mayor's accounts for that year say that the benches of the Guildhall had been " broken and thrown down in the presence of the King's Justices then sitting to hold the Assize."

The only other article of furniture we hear of is a locked chest, or " common coffer," used for holding the deeds and muniments of the Guild. Other documents, rolls and charters, were kept in sacks and hampers. There was also a cheker, or counter, in the hall in the 16th century, if not earlier. The weights and measures were also there, as well as the seals, which were kept in a purse with four keys. Grasses were bought sometimes, upon special occasions, for carpeting the floors of the Hall and Upper Chamber. The Bell used for calling the community together, which the Guild had bought for sixpence in 1220, and had mended in 1258 at a cost of 3d., was also kept there, as well as the Mace, which was renewed in the year 1378 at a cost of 13s. 6d. The latter instrument, it should be noted, was for many centuries no mere ornamental symbol of authority, but a formidable weapon, by means of which the Mayor of the

day " could break the helmet or smash the armour of an opponent, as one would crack the shell of a lobster with a hammer." Other weapons of offence and defensive armour were also kept in the Guildhall. Ever since the days of Edward the Confessor it had been the duty of the town of Leicester to send twelve burgesses to fight by land with the King's army. Thus, in 1322, twelve foot-soldiers were sent to fight in the Scotch war. In 1346 the contribution was reduced by the King's Council to six. For the use of these levies arms and equipment were bought from time to time by the Guild Merchant and kept in repair on their premises. In 1521 the town undertook to keep 10 able archers in harness with bows and arrows, swords and bucklers, " with other able harness for their bodies," to be ready for the King's use at a day's notice.

Inventories were sometimes made of the armour belonging to the town. In 1549, for instance, a list was set out of all the harness delivered by the Mayor to certain of the brethren, " to be safely kept for the town's use till it be needful to be occupied." Again, in 1551, an Inventory was taken of the plate and other property which was to be handed down from Mayor to Mayor, from which we learn that there were at that time " in the towne hall to the townes use these parcelles followyng :—

Itm. xx^{t} alman revyttes " (*i.e.*, corslets rivetted in the German fashion) " with splentes, sallytes and gorgetes.

Itm. xix^{t} shef of arrowys with caces and gyrdelles.

Itm. on byll, tow bowys, viii^{t} swordes, three daggers."

In the lane outside the Guild Hall stood a pair of stocks.

The first Hall had been known as the " Guild House " (messuagium communitatis gildæ, or messuagium gildæ, or domus gildæ). The second was called the Leicester Hall (aula Leycestriæ), or the Guild Hall (aula gildæ), and afterwards the Moot Hall, the Mayor's Hall, the Hall of the Community, or the Common Hall. The name Town Hall did not come into use until the 15th century. It appears first in the Borough Records in the year 1452 ; and, on September 20th, 1462, the Mayor and Community leased to their Town Clerk a house and garden, which were described as adjoining the " Town Hall."

It was not found necessary to spend much upon repairing the Hall until the year 1306, when the roof began to give trouble. A " Keeper of the Guild Hall " was then appointed, who bought slates and other materials for mending the fabric. He made a bargain with a slater by contract for 5s. 11d., " and two boys helping him 4s. 1½d.," the total cost (including some new benches) amounting to 19s. 2¾d. This bargain did not prove, however, to have been a good one, for extensive repairs were again found necessary in 1314, when a thousand slates were put on the roof; and once again, in 1320, another thousand slates had to be used. Six years later, an end was made of this kind of tinkering, and the work of restoration was properly carried out, the structure being re-timbered and re-plastered, and re-tiled with two and a half thousand slates. After this reconstruction, which cost nearly £3, the building remained serviceable for upwards of forty years. By the middle of the 14th century, however, it had fallen into such a ruinous condition that timber was bought, it would seem, for propping it up, and it was again re-slated. In the Spring of 1366, the community decided to undertake the task of rebuilding it. This work was well carried out, at a cost of £24 14s. 0d., under the direction of William of Syston and John of Scraptoft, " keepers of the work of the common hall of the town." Some of the old slates were used up in roofing the little chapel on the West Bridge.

During the next two centuries this new building served as the Guild Hall of the Borough, although after the lapse of little more than a hundred years it was found somewhat inadequate for the purpose. Before the 15th century had run its course, the Community found it necessary to hold some at least of their meetings in the more commodious Hall of the Corpus Christi Guild. Long before the actual purchase of this Guild's building by the Leicester Corporation, the hall in Blue Boar Lane was sometimes referred to as " the old Hall," or " the old Mayor's Hall," so that it had evidently even then lost much of its vogue. It was sometimes, perhaps rather later, called disparagingly " the olde shoppe." It was still used by the Corporation, however, and periodically repaired. It was indeed handsomely redecorated in

1549-50 and painted with fantastic designs, " antick work," as it was called, scriptures and the King's arms, The garden was let off in 1537 on a thirty years' lease to a private citizen at a rent of 23 pence. It may be the garden " against the Mayor's Hall," which was sold about 1590 to Thomas Clarke for 30s. It should be mentioned that in 1461 a house, near the High Cross, had been given to " the Mayoralty of the town of Leicester perpetually " by John Reynold the Elder. He had himself held that " honourable and worshipful office," as he states in the deed of Conveyance, no less than four times, and he had no doubt felt the want of accommodation. It is not known if the house furnished an official residence of the Mayor, or if it was used in some other way.

After the purchase of the Corpus Christi Guild Hall in 1562-3, the old Mayor's Hall was still kept in repair, The armour was removed to the new hall, and so was one of its doors. Before the building of the Free Grammer School, the old Mayor's Hall did duty at least on one occasion as a temporary school. It had long been used for the reception of prisoners, and also for the storage of coal. In 1573 a stone wall was built to divide the coal-house from the prisoners. The Corporation passed a resolution, seven years later, that no member of the 48 should be punished any longer at the old hall, but at the new.

It is not known when the Old Mayor's Hall was demolished, and different stories are told about its end. According to some M.S. notes made by James Thompson, it was sold in 1653 to John Kestian, malster, for £30. Throsby asserted, on the other hand, that during the siege of Leicester in 1645 the building was used as a store room for powder and ball, and was blown up by the King's forces at the storming of the town. This statement has been repeated, with some hesitation, by other writers. But in the rent roll of the Leicester Corporation for the year 1694 " the Mayor's Old Hall " still appears, so that Throsby's story is probably untrue, and could at the most apply only to a partial demolition, and Thompson also seems to have been mistaken.

III.

It is quite within the bounds of probability that the Hall and Parlour of the Corpus Christi Guild were built and designed not

only for the meetings and suppers of the Guild, but also for the transaction of municipal affairs. The connection of the Town authorities and the Corpus Christi Guild had been extremely close ever since the Guild was founded in the middle of the 14th century. The men who governed the borough were always, to a very large extent, the same as those who managed the Guild; and as time passed on, the co-operation of the two bodies became constantly more noticeable. Thus, it is evident from an ordination passed by the Mayor and his Brethren in the year 1477 that, as North has pointed out, " the two masters of the Corpus Christi Guild were at that time closely connected with the Corporation in the Government of the town, and to some extent were invested by the Mayor and his Brethren with superior authority, inasmuch as they had power to inflict penalties on the Mayor himself in case he neglected his duty."

The earliest allusion to the Hall and Parlour of the Guild occurs in their Accounts for 1493-4, when a payment was made " for sweeping of the parlour and the hall." In the preceding year the rentcollectors also took credit for some repairs done to the Chantry, or residence of the guild priests, which is then first mentioned.

Now, in the year 1862, Mr. Gordon Hills examined these buildings, and reported upon them to the Meeting of the British Archaeological Association which was held at Leicester in that year.* The conclusion which he drew from a very close and critical survey of the architectural features of the buildings was that they were built in the reign of Henry VII. If that is so, they must have been put up somewhere about the year 1490, replacing " cottages " and " ground " in St. Martin's Church Lane, which appeared in older rentals of the guild.

At that time, the Guild was a rich body, its income being larger than that of the town, and the shrewd burgesses who managed the concerns of both felt, no doubt, that the resources of the guild might be well employed in providing that accommodation

* Not the Meeting of the *Royal Archaeological Institute*, as Kelly inadvertently named it in his account of the old Guildhalls. The meeting of that body at Leicester took place in 1870.

for carrying on the town's business which was then so badly required. If that was the case, the Mayor and his Brethren probably made use of the new buildings as soon as they were completed, although the earliest date on which a common hall is actually recorded to have been held there was January 8th, 1494-5, (10 Henry VII.) There is no record of any rent being paid by the town, but the Town Chamberlains took credit for payments, " for charcoal for Mr. Mayor and his brethren at Corpus Christi Hall divers times." The relations between Town and Guild were doubtless on an easy footing, and not defined by strict contract. Possibly the Mayor and his Brethren themselves subscribed towards the building ; at all events they seem to have felt themselves entitled to some beneficial interest, occupying the Hall rent-free, although the freehold was vested in the Guild.

The crash came at Easter, 1548, when the chantry foundations ceased to exist, and the legal estate in their property passed to the Crown. Leicester had taken no open steps to resist the Chantry Bill of the first year of Edward VI. as Coventry did. The burgesses of Coventry, it will be remembered, were only induced to withdraw their opposition to it by a promise, which was duly performed, that, if they did so, the more important guilds in their constituency should recover their lands. Indeed, in this case, " the confiscation of the guild lands of Corpus Christi would simply have been the ruin of an already decaying city." Leicester was not so dependent on its chief guild as Coventry was, but what happened at the former town in 1548 is not very clear. It may be gathered from the Borough Records and from the Conveyance hereinafter quoted, that the Mayor and his Brethren managed in some way to retain the use of the Guild Hall apparently on the same terms as before. In the Chamberlains' accounts for this period, the two Town Halls are distinguished as " The Old Mayor's Hall," or the " Old Hall," or " the Mayor's Hall," on the one hand, and " the Hall," or " the new Hall," " Corpus Christi Hall," or the " Town Hall " on the other. Both were kept in repair at the cost of the town, or by voluntary contributions. Thus, in 1556-7, a study was provided for the Mayor, at " the

Hall," when 9 pieces of old wood and 44 pounds of lead were bought " from the church " for that purpose. Towards this work a sum of £7 16s. 0½d. was lent, the Mayor himself contributing 10s. " The church " was no doubt St. Martin's, but the accounts of the Churchwardens of that church for the year 1556-7 are unfortunately wanting.

The Mayor and his Brethren must have been anxious to obtain the freehold of the new Hall, and they entrusted the negotiations, it would seem, to Robert Braham, who was appointed to the Recordership of Leicester in 1558, and who was M.P. for the town in four parliaments.

Braham completed the matter a few years later through a Mrs. Pickerell, a wealthy widow of Norwich. She belonged to a very well-known and prosperous Norfolk family, being a daughter of Augustin Steward of Norwich, esquire, (who was Sheriff of Norwich in 1526, Mayor in 1534 and 1546, and M.P. for Norwich in 1542), and of Elizabeth, daughter of William Read of Beccles, Suffolk, esquire. Mrs. Pickerell's grandfather was Geoffrey Steward of Norwich, and she was named after her paternal grandmother Cecilia, a daughter of Augustin Boyce.*

The family of the Pickerells was also well-known at Norwich. Thomas Pickerell, who died in 1544-5, had been Mayor of the city three times, and he was, in all probability, nearly related to John Pickerell, the husband of Cecilia Steward.† John Pickerell lived at Dichborough, near Diss, in the county of Norfolk ; and it does not appear that he had any connection with

* See the Steward pedigree in the Visitation of Norfolk, 1563, (Harleian Society, 1891) 268-270, and Rye's Index to Norfolk Pedigrees (Norwich 1896) p. 116. Mr. George Farnham of Quorn has very kindly called my attention to another trace of Mrs. Pickerell's business transactions. Common Pleas Plea Roll 1224 Michaelmas 7 Elizabeth m. 894. A.D. 1564. "Cecilia Pyckerell of the City of Norwich, widow *v.* Roger Mansell of Pedmore co. Worcester yeoman Ralph Sheldon of Bewley co. Worcester gent and John Farnham of the Palace of the lady the Queen esquire in pleas of debt of £100 respectively."

† In Thomas Pickerell's will, dated 10th September, 1545, and proved 13th March, 1545-6, the Testator mentions a son Edmund and a brother Edward, but no John. John may have been either brother, son, or nephew of Thomas. The arms of Pickerell were "sable, a swan close argent, a chief ermine."

Leicestershire, though there was a John Pickerell, who owned some land at Leicester in 1492, and who may possibly have been connected with the Norfolk family.

The Will of John Pickerell of Dichborough, dated the 1st of November, 1554, was proved on February 9th, 1555 by Edmund Brudenell, proxy for the relict and executrix. The Testator gave all his lands tenements houses and orchards within the city of Norwich to his wife Cecily for life, and for her jointure of 40 marks a year he gave her £400 in money, and a debt owing to him of £500 (200 marks of which were to be paid on the marriage of their daughter Suzanne). And he left his wife all his furniture and horses, etc., (with one or two exceptions), and all his debts and his lands called " Dicheborowe and Rassall " with their appurtenances in Norfolk ; and, after giving his son Richard £40 and his daughter, the wife of Francis Bolton, £20, " to be paid to them on the recovery of my debts owing by the Queen's Majesty," the Testator left the residue to Cecily his wife, and appointed her sole executrix.

Cecilia Pickerell was thus a woman of considerable means, and she became a large investor in the lands of dissolved chantries. It is possible that the debt owing by the Crown, which is referred to in John Pickerell's Will, may have been discharged from this source. No less than three Royal Grants were made to Mrs. Pickerell within two years : the first in the third year of Elizabeth ; the next in the February of the fifth year, and the third in the June of the same year.

The Leicester Recorder approached Mrs. Pickerell perhaps after her first grant in 1560-1, and made a bargain with her that in her next batch of investments she should include the premises of the Leicester Corpus Christi Guild Hall, and re-sell them to him at a fixed price. The negotiations may have been carried out, if one may hazard the conjecture, through Mrs. Pickerell's proxy, Edmund Brudenell, who had proved her husband's will. Brudenell is not a Norfolk name, and Edmund Brudenell was probably one of the Brudenells of Staunton Wyville or Staunton Brudenell, in the county of Leicester. There were at that time at least three members of the family who bore the Christian name

of Edmund; (1) Sir Edmund Brudenell, who died in 1584-5, grandson of Sir Robert Brudenell, Chief Jusuce of the Common Pleas, and a Commissioner to survey lands in Leicestershire, (2) his uncle Edmund, and (3) his cousin Edmund, who died at Staunton Wyville in 1590, and whose alabaster figure, arrayed in magisterial robes, lies in the chancel of Staunton Wyville church. The inscription placed over his monument records that he was " a man that lyved in the treue feare of God, a lover of hospitalitie, pitiful to the poore, a quieter of controversies in his countrie, beloved of his neighbours, learned in the laws of the realme bothe civill and common." This worthy county magnate would be well-known to the Leicester Recorder and M.P., and pending the production of further evidence, it will do no harm to indulge in the hypothesis, that it was partly through the good offices of Edmund Brudenell of Staunton Wyville that the 15th century Guild Hall of Leicester became restored to the Town.*

The grant made to Mrs. Pickerell on February 6th, 1562-3 was very extensive, and comprised property in Derbyshire, Chester, Devon, Norfolk, Essex, Cambridgeshire, Sussex, Surrey, etc. The roll is actually some 50 feet in length, consisting of 42 membranes sewn together end to end. There seems to be no Leicestershire property contained in any of the three grants except Leicester Corpus Christi Guild Hall passing under the grant of February 6th, 1562-3, by the same description as that which appears in the Conveyance to Braham. That Conveyance was in all probability prepared beforehand, to await the sealing and official enrolment of the grant to the vendor.

A Deed of Conveyance is still preserved in the Muniment Room of Leicester City, which is endorsed on the front " The Deeds for the Town Hall," and on the back " They dedis and Raylaisse of the towne hall bought by Mr. Brayham o^r^ Recorder in the tyme of Mr. Raynold mayre Anno 1563." This document was produced at the meeting of the British Archaeological Association before referred to. As it has not

* It is worth noting that Robert Braham's only daughter and heiress, Phillippa, married Henry Cave, of Barrow-on-Soar, the fourth son of Francis Cave, Doctor of Civil Law, of Bagrave, Leicestershire. (Visitation of Leicestershire, page 120.)

been published in the Records of the Borough, a translation of it is here given.

" TO ALL the faithful in Christ to whom this present writing indented shall have come CECILIA PICKERELL of the City of Norwich widow late wife of John Pickerell Gentleman now deceased (sends) greeting perpetual in the Lord KNOW YE that I the aforesaid Cecilia for a certain sum of money to me the aforesaid Cecilia beforehand well and duly paid by Robert Braham of Barrow-on-Soar in the County of Leicester gentleman whereof I own myself to be fully paid and satisfied and the same Robert and his heirs and executors to be acquitted and exonerated in perpetuity by these presents have delivered granted enfeoffed sold and bargained and by this my present writing indented have confirmed to the same Robert ALL THAT cottage or tenement with its appurtenances situated and being next the burial ground of Saint Martin's in the town of Leicester in the County aforesaid now or late in the tenure or occupation of the Mayor and Burgesses of Leicester aforesaid and late for some while belonging and pertaining to the Guild of Corpus Christi there AND any reversion or reversions of all and singular the premises and of any part thereof as well as the rents and annual profits in any way reserved upon any leases or grants of the premises or of any part thereof in any way made as fully and freely and entirely and in as full manner and form as I the aforesaid Cecilia Pickerell late held all and singular the same premises (amongst other things) by the grant and concession to me and my heirs in perpetuity of Our Lady Queen Elizabeth that now is by letters patent sealed with her great seal of England bearing date at Westminster the sixth day of February in the fifth year of the reign of the said Lady our Queen as by the said letters patent (amongst other things) more fully is clear and doth appear TO HAVE AND TO HOLD and to enjoy all the aforesaid cottage or tenement with its appurtenances to the aforesaid Robert Braham his heirs and assigns in perpetuity for the sole and proper use and behoof of him the said Robert his heirs and assigns in perpetuity To Hold of the aforesaid Lady Queen her heirs and successors as of her Manor of East Grenewich in her county of Kent in free socage by fealty and not in

capite for all rents or outgoings and demands whatsoever therefrom to the said Lady Queen her heirs and successors by whatever means to be rendered paid or done AND I the aforesaid Cecilia Pickerell and my heirs the aforesaid cottage or tenement to the aforesaid Robert his heirs and assigns in perpetuity for the aforesaid use against me the aforesaid Cecilia and my heirs will warrant and in perpetuity will defend by these presents AND MOREOVER know ye that I the aforesaid Cecilia have made ordained and constituted and in my room by these presents have put the to me beloved in Christ John Eyrycke and William Manbie my true and lawful attorneys jointly and severally to enter in my stead and in my name upon the aforesaid cottage or tenement with its appurtenances and full and peaceable possession therein to take and afterwards to deliver full and peaceable possession and seisin of and in the same cottage or tenement with its appurtenances to the aforesaid Robert or his in this behalf certain attorney according to the tenor force form and effect of this my present writing indented then completed for him holding and to hold satisfied and approved all and whatsoever my said attorneys in my stead and in my name shall have done or either of them shall have done of and in the premises by these presents IN WITNESS whereof to this my present writing indented I the aforesaid Cecilia have affixed my seal dated the seventh day of February in the fifth year of the reign of our Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God of England France and Ireland Queen Defender of the Faith

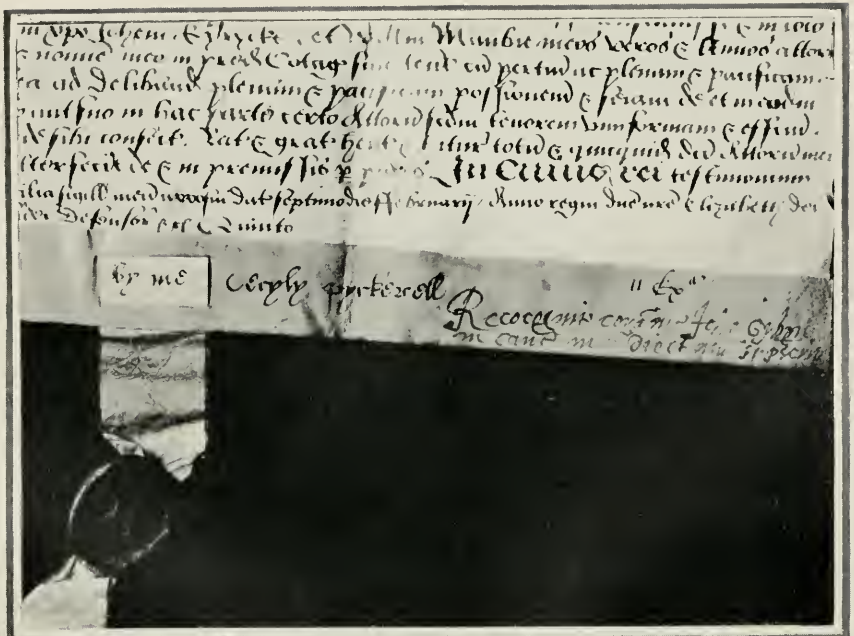
by me Cecyley Pickerell
RECOGNISED before me John Gybon
in my Chancery the day and year above written."

The use of the word " cottage," to describe the Hall and premises of the Corpus Christi Guild lying on the West side of St. Martin's churchyard, is somewhat strange. It may be due merely to legal conservatism, the parcels being copied from the original conveyance to the guild, when there was nothing but a cottage on the land, only the names of the tenants being brought up to date. Or it may be owing (as Mr. S. H. Skillington suggests), to a desire to minimise the importance which the

Leicester authorities attached to the premises thus conveyed. Certainly, the real meaning of the transaction was not allowed to appear on the surface of the deed. In any case it seems that the Conveyance must have included the whole of the old guild premises west of St. Martin's churchyard. This is shown by the endorsement written on the back of the Conveyance, which is much earlier than the other endorsement, and must have been made soon after the execution of the deed, the handwriting being contemporary. It is also proved by the general circumstances of the case, and especially by the corroboration of the Borough Records. In the Chamberlains' Accounts for the year 1562-3, there is an entry referring to wine drunk at the "possession-taking of the Hall," and it is also noted that a certain sum was paid to Mr. Manby, one of the attorneys mentioned in the Conveyance, "that he laid out for the purchase of the Hall," and that £2 13s. 4d. more was paid to Mr. Recorder for the same Hall, "that he laid out and for his pains." The sum then paid to Manby is stated by Kelly and North to have been £10. A further payment of £7 9s. 4d. was made to Manby in 1565-6, and also some "arrearages" of the Hall were paid, stated by Kelly to have amounted to £5 10s. 8d. The total amount of the purchase money cannot be exactly ascertained, but does not seem to have been large, and, if the figures given above are correct and exhaustive, did not exceed £25.

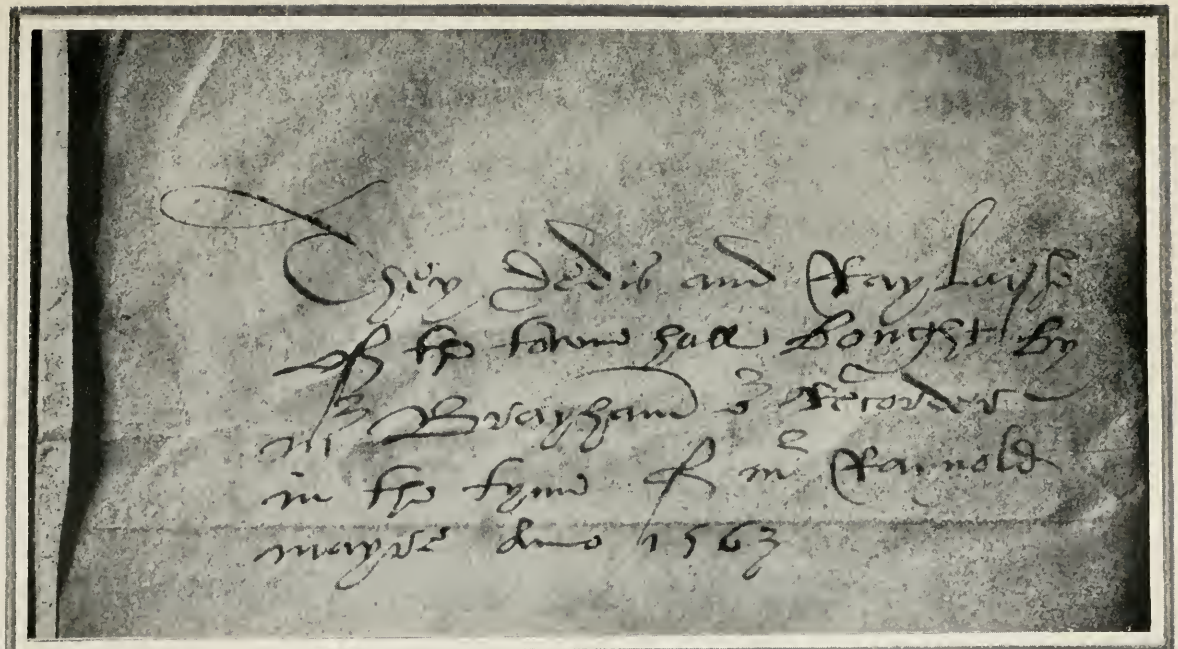
The title of the Corporation was further confirmed in 1589 by the Charter of Queen Elizabeth, wherein she granted to the Mayor and Burgesses of Leicester, "the chantry of Corpus Christi Guild with its lands let to R. Hawkes and T. Bate," and the "guild called Corpus Christi Guild." The lease to Hawkes and Bate expired at Lady Day, 1595, and the lands and tenements comprised therein then fell into the possession of the Leicester Corporation, subject only, as appears from the Town Chamberlains' accounts, to a small yearly payment of 7s. 9d. The particulars of the lands and tenements are set out in the Corporation's Rental for the year ending Michaelmas, 1595.

It is said by Nichols that all the possessions of the Corpus Christi Guild were purchased from King Edward VI by Robert Catlyn, of Beby, in Leicestershire, afterwards Chief Justice of



Signature, etc.

Conveyance Relating to Old Guild Hall



Endorsement

England. He does not, however, give any authority for this statement, which seems inconsistent with Queen Elizabeth's grant to the Leicester Burgesses. Among the particulars for grants of the reign of Edward VI, filed at the Augmentation Office, there is, however, a request dated 8 July, 3 Ed. VI, by Robert Catlyn of London and William Thomas, to purchase the *farm* of parcel of the possessions of the late guild or chantry of Corpus Christi in the town of Leicester. It would seem therefore that, if this grant were carried out, Catlyn and Thomas, or their nominee, took a lease for years only of part of the Guild's possessions, leaving the freehold in the Crown.

The buildings seem to have occupied the four sides of a square, with an open court in the centre. On the North, fronting the street, stood the Hall of Corpus Christi, 62 feet long by 19 broad : on the West lay the Parlour, with rooms over : on the South were the Kitchens, and on the East, facing St. Martin's church, were the residences of the four chantry priests. These four houses are alluded to incidentally in the Guild's rental for the year 1525-6, where the following entry occurs : " Mending of the Chantry wickett and iiij keys, vjd " : from which it appears that each of the four chantry priests occupying the four houses had a separate key to the " wykkett." In the Chantry Certificate of the Chantry of Corpus Christi Leicester returned under the Act of 37 Henry VIII c. iv, the house and garden of the chantry priests are said to be situated at the west end of the church,* and to be of the annual value of 10s.

For some years after the purchase of the new Guild Hall, the accounts of the Town Chamberlains refer to various repairs that were carried out there, especially in connection with the benching, and mending the hangings of the parlour, and the stairs going up into the high chamber.

The Hall and Parlour were used not only for civic business and for the Assizes, but also for social gatherings and for theatrical entertainments. Other rooms were adapted to various purposes. One of them seems to have been given up to the use of the schoolmaster. Another was used as an armoury, and another as a

* In the original " St. Mary's," but obviously St. Martin's is intended.

Larderhouse. The Chamberlains' accounts allude also to the kitchen and the Spice-house. A bedroom was fitted up in 1582, for the accommodation of the Recorder, Richard Parkins, who "applied himself to reading and digesting the records of the town." The accounts for the same year give particulars of the bedroom's furniture; and a note is added, saying that it remains to the use of the corporation, and is yearly to be recorded in the account of the Mayors "for the better remembrance thereof."

Shortly after the purchase of the new Hall, some annoyance seems to have been caused on account of the Mayor's having lent it for meetings of the "paratours" or cloth-makers, for in 1572 the Corporation emphatically resolved that "the Hall, nor no part thereof, nor no implement belonging to the same, shall not at any time hereafter be lent neither by the Mayor for his time being nor no other officer nor officers."

The Mayor's Seat in the Hall was erected in the year 1586, and the date is inscribed above it between the letters E.R. A sum of fifteen shillings was paid to John Carver "for carving and making the Queen's Arms which is in the Hall extant," and for the gilding thereof 26s. 8d. These arms were not in the Hall itself, but in "a chamber at the Hall."

The Mayor's Parlour at present existing was built or restored in the year 1636. "This year the Parlour belonging to the Guildhall with the chamber gallery evidence house and other rooms adjoining unto the same were newly erected at the charge of the common chamber." The cost was £224. "The carving of the chimney-piece was finished at an outlay of £5 16s. 6d. to the carver, £4 13s. 6d. to the joiners and woodseller, and £2 10s. for the colouring and gilding. It remains to this day a monument of the skill and taste of the period of its execution."

In the year 1584 the Town Hall was mortgaged to secure a loan guaranteed on behalf of the Corporation by two of its members. Robert Herrick, who was then Mayor, and Thomas Clarke, the wealthy landlord of the Blue Boar Inn, had bound themselves in a bond of £200 to Agnes Stringer for the payment of £100, and it was resolved that "for their security there shall be the Town Hall vocat' Guildhall assured unto them." Agnes

Stringer was a well-to-do widow, who appears in the Subsidy Roll of 1590 as an owner of land at Leicester. She may have been the widow of Roger Stringer, who was a Town Chamberlain in 1576-7, an Alderman in 1583, and an Auditor of Accounts for the South Quarter in 1581-2. His Will was proved at Leicester in 1585, and he may have died in the previous year. The Will of Agnes Stringer was proved in 1603. Either Mrs. Stringer or her husband had advanced the £100 for repayment of a debt incurred by the Corporation in promoting the manufacture of cloth. The rest of the Twenty-four promised to pay 1s. 2d. each, and the Fortyeight 7d. each, quarterly, towards the payment. The Town Hall was mortgaged as further security.

A great feast was held at the new Leicester Guildhall in 1588, to celebrate the defeat of the Armada. The Earl of Huntingdon, his brother, Walter Hastings, who was in command of the troops in Leicestershire prepared to resist the apprehended invasion, Thomas Skeffington, of Belgrave, who was then High Sheriff of the County, and many other gentlemen of the neighbourhood were entertained by George Norris, the Mayor of Leicester. The event was commemorated on future anniversaries.

For these great civic banquets all the accommodation of the building was required. There were two long tables, known as the first and the second, which extended down the length of the Hall, and in the Parlour were also first and second tables, while room was found for yet another table in the chamber upstairs. Nichols gives the Bill of Fare of one Gargantuan Feast which contains more than 150 different items.

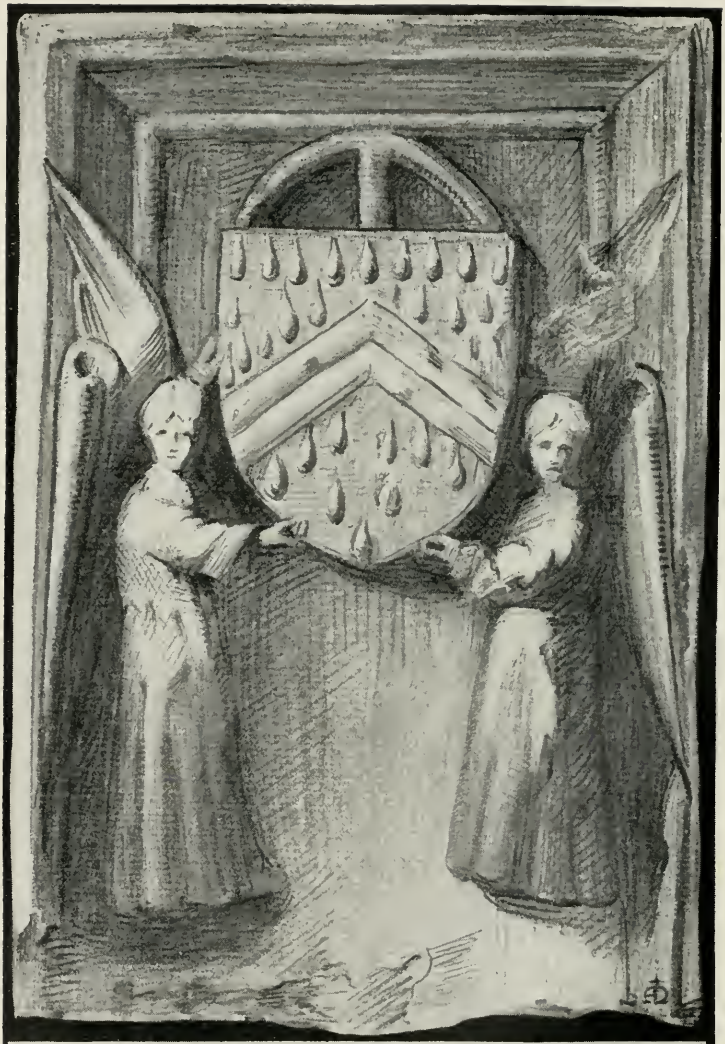
On other occasions the Hall was given up to theatrical performances. When companies of actors visited Leicester, they seem generally to have played at the Town Hall whenever it was available. In the year 1585-6, "The Earl of Essex' players" had a solatium paid to them of 20s., because "they were not suffered to play at the Hall." They were prevented from doing so probably by the alterations which were at that time being carried out there. The upper end of the building was used as a stage, and some of the hooks from which the curtain

was suspended were recently to be seen upon one of the beams. No less than 56 different companies of actors are mentioned in the 16th century Records of the Corporation as having visited the town. Among them was one of which William Shakespeare was a member and shareholder, and it is traditionally believed that the poet played with his Company at the Leicester Town Hall. The subject has been fully investigated by Mr. William Kelly, who came to the conclusion, that although there is no actual proof of the historical truth of this tradition, there is still a certain presumption in its favour.

During the years 1632 and 1633 some alterations were made in the rooms which had originally formed the residences of the four Chantry Priests, and to these newly-adapted premises the Town Library was removed from St. Martin's church. The books have remained ever since in the same congenial quarters.

The history of the Town Halls of Leicester has never been written, and requires further investigation. The foregoing sketch must therefore be considered as merely preliminary and tentative, and it is liable to be corrected in some particulars by the evidence of future research.

It remains now only to add that the fifteenth century Hall narrowly escaped the same untimely fate as that which swept away the adjoining Hospital in 1875. As soon as the present fine pile of municipal buildings was finished, in 1877, the ancient mediaeval structure became quite superannuated, and many a voice demanded its demolition. Fortunately, in this instance, good sense and civic piety prevailed, and the old Guild Hall is still in existence. Long may it be preserved for the instruction of future ages, even as the rude straw-thatched hut, known as the " cottage of Romulus," was kept standing among the splendid monuments of imperial Rome, to remind her citizens of their humble origin, and of the simple, primitive virtues which are the only roots of greatness and national strength.



Arms from Old Wigston Hospital

VI.

THE TWELVE DEMOLISHED CHURCHES AND CHAPELS.

A GREAT deal has been written about the mediaeval churches which still exist at Leicester, but not so much about those which have been destroyed. It may be worth while therefore to recall what is known of them.

They include three parish churches within the town, those of (1) St. Clement, (2) St. Peter, and (3) St. Michael; (4) the church of the Grey Friars, and (5) the church of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin in the Newarke; and two smaller buildings, (6) the chapel of St. John's Hospital, and (7) the chapel of Wigston's Hospital. Outside the walls of the town were (8) the church of St. Leonard, (9) the church of St. Sepulchre, or St. James, (10) the little chapel on the West Bridge, (11) St. John's chapel in Belgravegate, and (12) the church of the Abbey of St. Mary of the Meadows.

Of the ancient churches or chapels of St. Austin and St. Columban, which may have existed at Leicester before the Conquest, there is little authentic information; and practically nothing seems to be known about the church of the Austin Friars.*

(1) THE CHURCH OF ST. CLEMENT.

The ancient parish church of St. Clement belonged to Leicester Abbey, and stood within the walls of the town, between the North Gate and the River Soar. The parish suffered very severely from the sack of 1173, and in 1220 it was so poor that it could hardly support a chaplain. By the year 1291 it had

* Throsby said that he had discovered the traces of this church, the direction of which was "from East to West, agreeably with the custom of church-building." According to his measurements, it was in length about 150 feet, and in width 90. It stood near the centre of what Leland calls the "ile between the arms of the Soar."

ceased to belong to Leicester Abbey. But it had not been destroyed ; and moreover the Rev. C. F. R. Palmer was in error when he wrote, in his account of " The Friars Preachers, or Black Friars of Leicester," " Nothing later " (than 1220) " is found concerning this church, which disappears entirely from view." It is true that, in a Roll of Leicester churches of the year 1344, St. Clement's is wholly omitted, but it was in use a few years before. On July 8th, 1331, a licence was granted for the alienation in mortmain by Philip Danet to the master brethren and sisters of the hospital of St. Leonard, Leicester, of 5 messuages and $7\frac{1}{2}$ virgates of land in Whetstone, Croft and Frisby-by-Galby to find a chaplain to celebrate divine service daily in the Church of St. Clement, Leicester, for the soul of the said Philip Danet, and for the souls of his parents brothers and sisters and of Robert Burdet and Petronilla his wife. The canons of the Abbey must have parted with the church some time between 1220 and 1291, and there can be no doubt that they gave it to the Friars Preachers, or Black Friars, who came to Leicester early in the reign of Henry III., before 1253, and settled in the grove of ash-trees near to St. Clement's church. The parish by their rules the Friars could not administer, but the church, dedicated to St. Clement, pope and martyr, became the church of their priory.

The absorption of St. Clement's church in the Black Friars is a very unusual incident. Mr. A. Hamilton Thompson, although his knowledge of mediaeval ecclesiology is remarkably wide, cannot recall a similar instance. In his opinion, which he kindly allows me to quote, Danet's proposed grant indicates that " if St. Clement's had been given over to the Black Friars, it still had parochial rights, which it would have been difficult to do away with ; otherwise the grant would have been made to the Friars themselves. Possibly the nave still belonged to the parish. As regards Friars' churches, however, this arrangement was most unusual ; but the Abbey, in granting the church to the friars, could only have surrendered the rectorial tithes and the chancel, and had no power to oust the parishioners from the nave without special agreement. The endowments of the church were very poor. The secular vicar appointed in 1221 had as his

stipend merely the daily allowance of a canon in the Abbey, so that it can have been no great sacrifice to the Abbey to part with it. I should not be surprised if the chantry of 1331 was contemplated in order to keep up the parochial services : the normal services in parochial chapels and churches, where there was no vicarage ordained, were frequently called chantries, and were precisely on the same footing."

" It appears from some old writings," says Nichols, " that a lane from the North Gate, turning westward to the Friars adjoining, and then running southward between the said Friars and the backs of the houses opposite to All Saints' Church, is called St. Clement's Lane, and therefore it is probable that the church was situated in or near it."

The church was visited by John Leland, the antiquary, about the year 1536. He noticed a knight's tomb in the choir, and a flat alabaster stone with the name of Lady Isabel, wife to Sir John Beauchamp of Holt ; and in the north aisle he saw the tomb of another knight, without scripture, and in the north cross aisle a tomb having the name of " Roger Poynter of Leicester armed," (? armiger, *i.e.*, esquire). Shortly after his visit, the church was demolished. A century later its very memory was beginning to fade away, for, in connection with the Metropolitan Visitation which Archbishop Laud held in 1634, Sir John Lambe made the following note :—" St. Clement's, Quaere, where it stood ? no such now."

(2) THE CHURCH OF ST. PETER.

This church also belonged to Leicester Abbey. The Vicar was instituted by the Bishop, his salary " ab antiquo " being five marks (£3 6s. 8d.). The clerk was chosen by the Abbot. St. Peter's seems to have been one of the six parish churches of Leicester recorded in Domesday Book, but the earliest reference to it by name appears to occur somewhere about the year 1200, when one of the witnesses of Richard Basset's charter to St. John's Hospital was " Gervasius clericus de Sancto Petro." The name of its vicar was given in 1221 as Robert the Chaplain. The parish, which was situated between those of All Saints and St. Martin, included part of the old High Street, and the church

itself stood near to that street in St. Peter's Lane. It is stated by Nichols that the old County Gaol (which stood at the corner of the old High Street and Free School Lane), had been built on the site of St. Peter's church, but he must have been mistaken. The church did not face the old High Street, but lay some way back from the main thoroughfare, and was approached by two lanes, one the present St. Peter's Lane, leading out of the old High Street, the other a cross-lane, coming from Dead lane. Fragments of the old church are thought to have been found during some excavations that were made in 1839, near the corner of St. Peter's Lane and West Bond Street ; and further confirmation of this site was discovered in 1892, when some workmen exposed what seemed to be a portion of the West wall, and the lower part of the tower, to a height of 8 or 10 feet.

A tragic event, which took place on Christmas Eve in 1306. may be quoted from the Coroner's Roll of that year. " It chanced about midnight that Simon the Welshman, clerk, came to St. Peter's church of Leicester, to ring the bells for matins, as the custom is; there he met William, vicar of the said church, standing in that church, who asked him where he had been tarrying so long, and struck him with a knife which is called *Misericorde* on the head even to the brain, and he lived for two days." The hue and cry were raised ; the townships came, that is the East, West, South and North Gates, " together with the frankpledge of that township " ; (*i.e.*, the North, in which the occurrence happened.) " They ordered the coroners and bailiffs of Leicester; whereof an Inquest was taken, who say that they suspect no one of the said death but the said William the vicar himself ; who kept himself in the said church for seven weeks, and afterwards came to the peace, and was kept in prison in the custody of Hugh the Mercer " (then Bailiff of Leicester). " He had chattels : 2 pieces of tapestry for five shillings, one housing of striped cloth for five shillings in the hands of Godfrey of Louvain, William of Broughton and William Turner, frankpledges ; two small sheets for 1 shilling and ten pence, 2 sheets for 2s. & 6d., in the hands of William of Ruddington ; one white tunicle for three shillings in the hands of the said frankpledges ; one pavilion of Persian

for ten shillings, one surplice and one rochet of Aylsham for ten shillings, in the hands of Benedict, vicar of the church of St. Mary de Castro in Leicester ; one laver and one basin for 5 shillings, in the hands of Henry Dowell, and two cushions for 3½d. ; one coffer and one table for 2s. and 6d., one chair and one couse for 4½d., and one pair of cymbals for one shilling and one penny ; two small seats for 3d., in the keeping of Robert the coverletmaker of Hallaton, at that time of the household of the said William the vicar. They say also on their oath that John Smith and his wife, dwelling near the North Gate, sold the chattels of the said William the vicar after the said felony was done to the value of four shillings and six pence. Total, £2 11s. 4d." Cases of violence done to clerks were very prevalent at that period, but there is no record of the vicar's punishment.

Nichols gives a few particulars relating to this Church and its vicars, but little is recorded of it before the 16th century, when it began to fall into decay. In 1389 an anchoress named Maud or Matilda, who lived in St. Peter's churchyard, came under the notice of the ecclesiastical authorities, as an exponent of Wycliffe's teaching. She was summoned to appear before the Archbishop of Canterbury himself on a charge of heresy ; but, when the poor creature came up for so formidable an examination, on November 1st, 1389, she must have recanted, for she was reconciled and absolved at St. James' Abbey, Northampton, on the following Thursday. At the visitation of the Bishop of Lincoln, held in St. Mary's church, Leicester, on September 20th, 1510, William Alcock was Vicar of St. Peter's, and presentations were then made for immorality in that parish. In 1526 John Ward was vicar, and Robert Green and John Pare were Church-wardens. It is not known in what year its religious use was discontinued, but it must have been shortly after the middle of the 16th century. In 1548 there were three churchwardens, who contributed 8s. 4d. towards a levy of horse-soldiers, raised for service in the Scotch wars. But the fabric must have been in a ruinous state, when, in 1555, the community purchased from the church-wardens some stone to be used in repairing the town-hall. Two years afterwards, the Corporation negotiated for a

lease of the building : " Mr. Mayor and other of the brethren went to speak for St. Peter's church." This lease was carried out in 1563, the rent being five shillings a year. Part of the old structure was repaired, and made use of as a school-house, the school-master being accommodated at the townhall. The bells were weighed, and found to contain 32 cwt. 13lbs. of lead and brass ; and, in the year after the lease was made, it was agreed at a common hall that one of them should be sold " to repair the school-house." The big bell was then sold for about £16; and, shortly afterwards, the rest were also sold to Leicester bellfounders, producing altogether more than £48. The churchyard continued to be kept in repair, and the ash-trees were lopped. In 1571 it was resolved at a common hall that the timber of the church should be taken down, and kept in safety with the lead " until further order be taken therein. ; " and in the following year the Town Chamberlains were paying men " to watch the lead certain nights at St. Peter's church." It amounted to as much as four fothers and five hundred pounds, about four tons. However, steps were being taken to enable the old materials to be converted to a worthy use, and, on April 7th, 1573, a deed was executed by which the Queen assigned to the " Mayor and coburgenses of the town of Leicester," all the lead, stone and timber belonging to the decayed church of St. Peter, for the purpose of erecting " in some convenient and meet place within the town of Leicester one substantial school-house meet and fit for children to be taught in, made with windows and doors necessary, and covered with slate." The consideration was £35, paid to the Duchy of Lancaster. The schoolhouse was built on land belonging to the town, at the corner of the old High Street and Free School Lane.

And now we come to the last scene in St. Peter's history. The church bells had been taken away, and the church had been demolished, but there was still a vicar, William Rudyard, a descendant of the Rudyards of Rudyard in the County of Stafford. His living was but a poor one. Its value was given on Wolsey's taxation of the Diocese of Lincoln in 1526 as 43s. 4d., and in 1561 it was estimated to be worth 45s. a year and the tithe 4s. 6d.

Nothing could be done for him until the living of All Saints became vacant. He was then, in May, 1584, instituted vicar of that parish church in addition to St. Peter's, his appointment being made by the Archbishop of Canterbury (the see of Lincoln being at that time vacant), and confirmed by the Crown. The two parishes thus became united during the lifetime of William Rudyard. It was thought desirable that this union should be made permanent, and so a petition was addressed to the Queen, in November, 1590, by the Council of Leicester and William Rudyard, supported by the Bishop of Lincoln, praying that this might be done. For some reason or other, the proposed union of parishes became a burning question in the town, and in the following year led to a heated discussion taking place in the Council Chamber. It was agreed finally " by the greater part then assembled " that the late parish of St. Peter should be united to " the new parish church of All Saints in Leicester," and the minutes of the meeting explain graphically how this result was brought about.

" There was assembled at this meeting of both Companies fifty and five, whereof all but thirteen or fifteen gave their consents to the said union for that they were bidden by Mr. Mayor that so many as would not consent thereunto should go forth of the hall or parlour. So as thereupon there went out but fifteen or thereabouts, the said Mr. Mayor sitting in the parlour still. Then said Mr. John Stanford " it is agreed, for here remaineth still," or " here is the greater part." And thereupon the hall break up. Yet after Mr. Mayor's departure out of the parlour there was some defuzion and altercation, for that the other side or part *viz.* Mr. James Clarke and they of St. Martin's parish said they were the greater part. Quaere ? " The various documents giving legal effect to the union of the two parishes thus initiated are given in full by Nichols.

It is a remarkable fact, that, although the Rev. William Rudyard cannot have been a young man when he was appointed to this living, he lived more than 42 years longer, ministering at his new church. When he was buried at All Saints, on the 18th June, 1626, it was noted on the register that he had been " vicar of All Saints about fifty years."

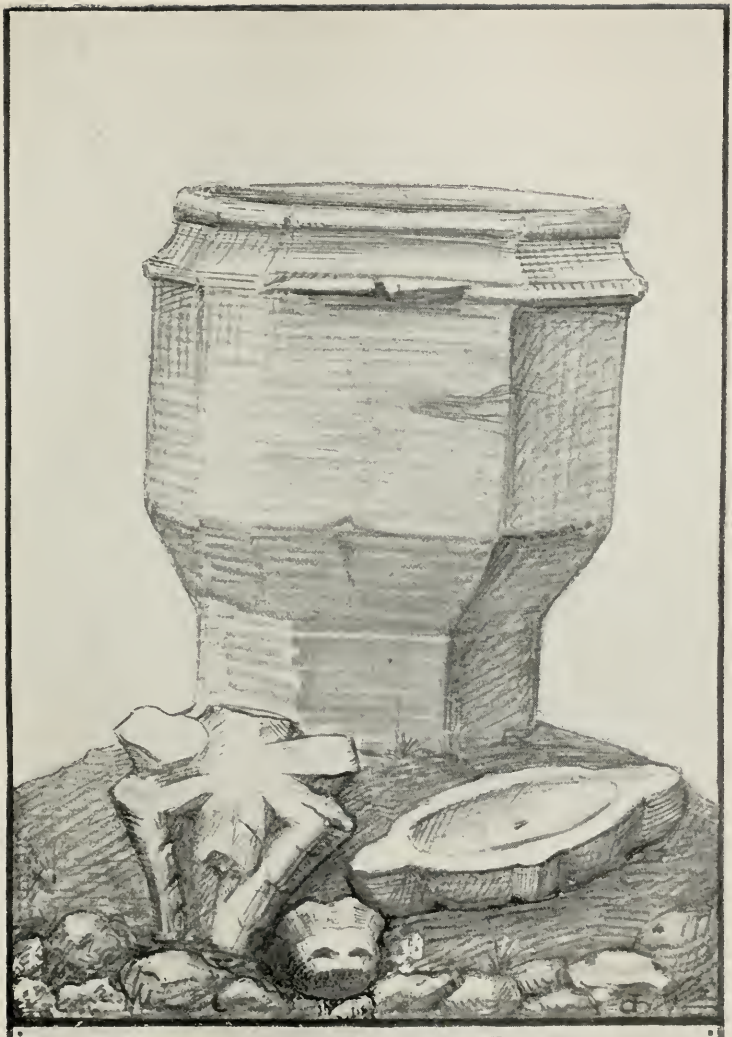
In the next century the churchyard of the old church of St. Peter was being used, according to Sir John Lambe, as " a cabbage ground."

A small piece of stained glass in the window of the Mayor's Parlour at the Old Town Hall, which is marked with the letter P. is pointed out as a relic, said by tradition (but on no other authority), to have come from old St. Peter's. Part of a holy water stoup, and several small fragments of masonry, that were discovered on the church's site about 1892, are now in the possession of Mr. Henry Hartopp of Leicester. A stone wall which runs along part of the yard of Salem Chapel, in Free School Lane, may have been one of St. Peter's boundaries. What is reputed by an old tradition to be the font of St. Peter's Church, is now standing within a garden in Guthlaxton Street.

(3) THE CHURCH OF ST. MICHAEL.

The history of St. Michael's church is not unlike that of St. Peter's. It was also one of the six churches existing at Leicester when Domesday Book was compiled, and belonged to Leicester Abbey. It suffered in the sack of 1173. Some historians say that it was nearly, others that it was wholly " demolished." It is certain that, after that great catastrophe, the parish was left in a ruinous state, and long remained desolate and uninhabited. Its " streets became green lanes ; and the sites of the houses, which for centuries afterwards remained unbuilt upon, were converted into orchards." Almost all the extant deeds relating to real estate in the old parish of St. Michael are concerned with " gardens," " plots of ground," and " crofts," and hardly ever refer to houses. One large area, known as " St. Michael's Croft," comprised a considerable number of gardens. The extremely rural aspect presented by this part of the town as late as 1495 may be gathered from a deed of that date, which describes a piece of land in St. Michael's parish. It was surrounded by hedges, which were said to contain 88 ashtrees and two aspens.

The church itself probably escaped any very serious damage in the great sack. At any rate, it seems to have been in use some twenty or thirty years after the siege, for two of the witnesses



Relics of Old St Peter's

to Richard Basset's charter to St. John's Hospital, executed about that time, were " William, Priest of St. Michael, " and " Alexander, Chaplain of St. Michael." In the year 1221 William Eyton was the vicar, and Henry de St. Martin in 1323. The church continued to be used during the 14th century, and we hear of a monk living as an anchorite there who had been trained by the great Leicester Abbot, William de Clowne. Like most of the 14th century churches of Leicester, it had its religious Guild, founded some time before 1361, in which year a house in Belgravegate was conveyed to Sir William of Birstall, chaplain, and Robert of Belgrave, skinner, " Brethren of the Guild of St. Michael at Leicester." Thomas of Beeby, who died about 1383, left a legacy to this guild. But there are some signs that the fortunes of the church were even then failing ; and one may note that a man named Thomas, who was charged before the Portmanmote in 1378-9 with trespass, and was distrained " by a tabard and slop and a bed price 20 shillings," is described as being " late chaplain of the church of St. Michael."

The use of the church was discontinued in the 15th century ; indeed Throsby says that it was totally demolished " about 1400." In 1487 there was no vicar, and evidently there had been none for some time. The lands of the church then belonged to the Abbot of Leicester, " pendente vacatione vicariae," the Bishop of Lincoln having waived any claim. The church itself seems to have disappeared at any rate before 1500, and the parish became united first with St. Peter's, and then with All Saints'. It lay between those two parishes, the church being situated somewhere in the " Back Lanes," between the old High Street and the eastern wall of the town. It was approached by a street described in old deeds as " the common way which leads to the church of St. Michael," which ran westward out of that part of the King's highway that was called Torchmere. Some land belonging to St. Michael's church abutted on the Town Wall and ditch.

After the Leicester authorities had obtained the royal charter in 1589, they recognized the services of their Town Clerk, William Dethick, by giving him a share of the Borough land, and by a conveyance bearing date the 27th day of April, 1591, they granted

to him " one parcel of ground or croft, with the appurtenances, called St. Michael's church-yard, together with one lane at the west end thereof, lying and being together in the parish of St. Peter in the town of Leicester." St. Michael's churchyard was then in the parish of St. Peter, for it was not until 1591, the year of this deed, that St. Peter's parish was united with that of All Saints.

It is stated by Nichols that part of the land comprised in "this conveyance was sold about the beginning of the 18th century" to the parishioners of All Saints, " in addition to their churchyard." The site was identified by Throsby, whose friend Mr. Cobley owned a house which had been built upon part of the old churchyard, and Cobley had among his titledeeds the conveyance to Dethick. The church is believed to have stood near the present Vauxhall Street and Causeway Lane. The position assigned to it, near the Castle, in the Plan of Leicester that is published in the first volume of the Borough Records, is manifestly erroneous.

(4) THE CHURCH OF THE GREY FRIARS.

St. Francis of Assisi died in 1226. A year or two before his death, Friars of his Order, or Friars Minor, who were called sometimes, from the colour of their garments, the Grey Friars, came into England. Their Priory at Leicester is said to have been founded by Simon de Montfort, the second of that name, who was Earl of Leicester from about 1238 to 1265. The Priory church seems to have been built about 1255, for in that year Henry III granted 18 oak-trees in the King's Hay of Alrewas to the Friars Minors of Leicester " to make stalls and wainscote their chapel."* They had certainly become established, and their church had been completed some time before 1292, when one of the boundaries of a messuage in St. Martin's parish was described as " the lane which leads to the church of the Friars Minors." The priory and church stood south of St. Martin's

*Alrewas is in Staffordshire, and there is still an "Alrewas Hay Farm" near to it. After a great quantity of timber had been blown down by the violent gale which swept over England in 1222, King Henry III. addressed letters of instruction to the officials of the Royal Forests. His Staffordshire forests were then described as "Kenifer," (Kinver), "Canoc," (Cannock Chase), "Alrewas and Hopwas." See J. C. Cox, "The Royal Forests of England," (London, 1905,) p. 6.

churchyard, and the large gardens and grounds belonging to the Order extended from the upper end of the Market Place nearly as far as the old High Street. One of the Gateways opened on Friar Lane, and there was another entrance from what is now called Peacock Lane. The church was destroyed soon after the dissolution of the monastery, and some of its old stones and timber were used for the repair of St. Martin's church.

Nichols has collected a few particulars of this Priory ; but the most exciting event in its history happened in 1402, when two of the brethren were hanged at Leicester, for saying that Richard the Second was still alive, and the Prior himself was drawn and quartered in his religious habit at Tyburn for a similar offence.

After the Battle of Bosworth Field in 1485, and the death of Richard III., his body was brought to Leicester, and interred in the church of the Grey Friars. Ten years afterwards, " a fair tomb of mingled-coloured marble adorned with his statue " was erected over his remains by his successor, Henry the Seventh. Leland states that " a knight called Mutton, some time Mayor of Leicester," was buried there, but no Mayor of this name is known. The tomb which Leland noticed was in all probability that of Sir William Moton, of Peckleton, Knight, who, according to Burton, was buried at the church of the Grey Friars in Leicester in the year 1362.

(5) THE CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF OUR LADY OF THE NEWARKE.

The collegiate church founded by Henry, Duke of Lancaster, in honour of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, was an enlargement of his father's original foundation, which had provided a Hospital within the Newarke. In the year 1353 he obtained a bull for carrying out his design, and in the following year royal letters patent were issued, granting him license to build a monastery in honour of the Annunciation of Our Lady out of his father's hospital, and to ordain a college of dean and canons secular. The Statutes for the regulation of the new foundation were

completed in 1355, and the College, richly endowed, began its existence.*

The new Church had not been finished when the good Duke was swept away by the second epidemic of the Black Death in 1361. In his will he enjoined his executors to complete it ; and he bequeathed to it all the furniture and relics of his chapel, and ordered that his body should be buried therein " on one side of the high altar over against the place where the body of our lord and father is interred." After his death, John of Gaunt, during the latter years of his life, took a personal interest in the building ; and when he died, in 1399, he bequeathed to the church his red garment of velvet embroidered with gold suns, and all the apparel connected with it, and the whole of his missals and some of the books belonging to his chapel. In the same year King Henry the Fourth executed a deed, in which, after reciting that his grandfather had begun the foundation of a collegiate church at Leicester, and that John, Duke of Lancaster, his father, had been desirous to complete the same, he granted a writ of aid for masons and material for the completion of the building. When the church was actually finished is not known. It was still incomplete when Henry the Fifth came to the throne in 1413, but was probably finished within a few years after his accession.

It was not a large building. " The College Church is not very great," wrote Leland, who saw it about 1536, " but it is exceeding fair." It lay on the south side of the quadrangle, the north side of which was occupied by the hospital. The cloisters ,which stood on the south-west side of the church, were described by Leland as " large and fair " ; and the houses in the compass of the area of the college for prebendaries all seemed to him " very pretty." The walls and gates of the college were stately. " The rich cardinal of Winchester," (Cardinal Beaufort), " gilded all the flowers and knots in the vault of the church."

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* The Statutes may be read in full in Mr. A. Hamilton Thompson's comprehensive " History of the Hospital and the New College of the Annunciation of our Lady of the Newarke at Leicester," published in the Papers of the Associated Architectural Societies, 1913-1916.

Within the church were tombs, thus described by Leland: "There lieth on the north side of the high altar Henry, Earl of Lancaster, without a crownet, and two men children under the arch next to his head. On the south side lieth Henry, the first Duke of Lancaster, and in the next arch to his head lieth a lady, by likelyhood his wife. Constance, daughter to Peter, King of Castile, and wife to John of Gaunt, lieth before the high altar in a tomb of marble, with an image of brass (like a queen), on it." (A grant of Henry IV recites that the Duchess Constance, his step-mother, his wife Mary Bohun, and his brothers lay buried in the church.) "There is a tomb of marble in the body of the choir. They told me that a Countess of Derby lay buried in it; and they make her, I wot not how, wife to John of Gaunt, or Henry IV. Indeed Henry IV, while John of Gaunt lived, was called Earl of Derby. In the chapel of St. Mary, on the south side of the choir, lie buried two of the Shirleys, knights, with their wives; and one Brokesby, an esquire. Under a pillar in a chapel of the south cross aisle lieth the lady Hungerford, and Sacheverell, her second husband. In the south side of the church lieth one of the Blunts, a knight, with his wife. And on the north side of the church lie three Wigstons, great benefactors to the College. One of them was a prebendary there, and made the free grammar school."

Six Chantries were founded in this church.

1. Simon's chantry was founded by Simon Symeon in 1381-2, "for the soul of Duke Henry, for the healthful estate of John of Gaunt, his son, Henry, earl of Derby, Simon Symeon and Elizabeth his wife, for their souls after death and the souls of the fathers and mothers of Simon and Elizabeth and all the faithful departed." On the day of Simon's obit, the office and mass of the dead were to be sung, and one of the canons was to say mass at the altar which Simon had constructed in the north part of the church, and three masses were to be said daily at the same altar.

2. There was also a chantry of one chaplain, founded in 1401 by a clerk in the household of John of Gaunt, known as

" Elvet's Chantry." The priest received £5 6s. 8d., and shared a house with the chaplain of Hervey's chantry.

3. Another chantry, founded by William Bedell, had one priest, who received £4 6s. 8d. a year.

4. By his will John of Gaunt ordained a chantry of two chaplains to celebrate divine service therein for ever for him and his soul and the soul of his late well-beloved consort, dame Constance, who was buried there, and to hold an obit for the soul of his late consort on the 24th day of March yearly for ever. This chantry was licensed by letters patent of March 8th, 1402-3. The two chaplains had a joint salary of £13 6s. 8d., and a chantry house and garden in the close, valued at 10s. a year.

5. The widow of William Hervey, who had been one of the ladies of John of Gaunt's household, and who was afterwards the nurse of Henry V., in the year 1406 founded a chantry of one chaplain to be appointed by the dean, who was to say mass daily either in the church or in the " poor folks' chapel." His salary was £5 6s. 8d., and he shared a chantry house in the close, valued at 10s. a year, with the chaplain of Elvet's chantry.

6. The chantry of William of Wigston was founded in 1512 for two chantry priests, who received £14 between them, and a house in the close, valued at 10 shillings a year, which is still in existence. He built to the honour of Almighty God, our blessed Lady, St. Ursula and St. Katharine, a new chapel, " inclosed with costly works wrought and made of latten, fixed and laid between two pillars, in the body of the church of the aforesaid college, on the north side thereof."

The most valuable ecclesiastical asset of the church was given to it by the good Duke of Lancaster, who brought home from Paris, in 1351, as a present from the French King, one thorn taken from the crown of Jesus, which had been enshrined by St. Louis in the Sainte Chapelle. This inestimable relic was placed near the high altar, upon a stand of pure gold. Pilgrims from all parts of Christendom were drawn to the church, perhaps more through the attraction of this treasure than by the exquisite beauty of the Gothic architecture, or by the indulgences and relaxations from penance which were granted to all those who

should visit it. But it was well worth a pilgrimage on its own account. It hath been commended " by Knights and Squires to have been the most fairest that ever was seen." " The flying traceries of its windows, the variety of its mouldings, and the general richness of its decorations made it the idol of the inhabitants, and the admiration of the faithful throughout Europe."

A curious scene took place in this church in the year 1389 when Archbishop Courtenay ordered three Lollards, who had adjured their heresies, to do penance. Their names were William Smith, Roger Dexter and Alice Dexter. They were condemned to perform their penance on three successive Sundays in the following manner. " On the first Sunday, William and Roger, in their shirts and breeches, and Alice in her shirt only, all with bare feet and heads, were to walk in the procession before high mass in the collegiate church, William carrying an image of St. Katherine, and Roger and Alice each a crucifix in their right hands, while all bore tapers of half-a-pound weight. Three times during the procession, at its beginning, middle, and end, they were to kiss the images, to the honour of the Crucified, and in memory of His passion, and in honour of St. Katherine, bending the knee devoutly. After the procession, they were to stand during the whole of the mass before the great rood, holding their images and tapers, and at the end they were to offer their tapers to the celebrant. Their penance on the following Sunday was to be done in the Market Place, and on the Sunday after in their parish church."

The college was dissolved in 1547, and the grace and beauty of this glorious church were utterly destroyed, some time before 1590.

(6) THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN'S HOSPITAL.

The Hospital, or College, of St. John the Evangelist and St. John the Baptist was a very ancient foundation at Leicester, but little is known of its early history. There does not seem to be any authority for Throsby's statement, that its church was destroyed during the contests between Henry II and his son, although the Hospital may have suffered in the sack of 1173. It was certainly in existence in the 12th century, for, some time

before 1200, Geoffrey Blundel of Cosby had become a Brother of the Hospital, and then " together with his body " gave land at Cosby " to God and St. John and the Brethren of the Hospital." This grant was confirmed by Richard Basset, whose charter is still preserved among the archives of the Borough. In the year 1219-20 " the Master of the Hospital of Leicester " was called to warrant in a case before the *curia regis*.

The church stood within the grounds of the Hospital, on the north side of St. John's Lane, (afterwards Causeway Lane), at the corner of the old High Street. We hear nothing of it for many years, except a few trivial incidents ; as when, in 1297, the church gave sanctuary to a burglar, and when, in 1313, a man who had been hung, and then taken into the cemetery of the church for burial, came to life again. About half-a-dozen years after the first visitation of the Black Death, a wealthy burgess of the town, named Peter the Saddler, who probably came from Grendon in Northamptonshire, gave property to John of Northborough, Master of the Hospital of St. John at Leicester, and the Brethren of the Hospital, that they might maintain a chaplain from among the Brethren, to celebrate daily, especially for the souls of Peter and Alice his wife, and all their sons and daughters. Shortly afterwards, in 1361, the second visitation of the pestilence, which then swept over the Midlands, inflicted on this House a terrible disaster, for nearly all the Brethren were struck down and perished.

The Guild of St. John was founded in this church ; and, early in the 15th century, Robert, son of Robert de Sutton, was Chaplain of the Guild. By his will, which was proved on February 10th, 1442, he directed that he should be buried " in St. Mary's chapel in the church of St. John the Baptist before the altar." In the year 1478,* when Richard Wigston was the Steward of the Guild, he agreed with Sir Robert Sileby the Master

* The date of this agreement is given in the published Records of the Borough (II. 282) as " September 20, 1464." This must be an oversight, for the deed is dated in 17 Edward IV., or 1478. Throsby and Nichols give the correct date.

and with the Brethren of the Hospital, that he and his successors "would find evermore during the said guild a good and an able priest to say or sing mass in the guild chapel of St. John aforesaid (and two days in the week in the chapel of St. John set at the town's end of Leicester), except that the master or his successors at any time will say mass there themself, and what time they say mass there or be forth of town that then the said guild priest shall sing or say high mass at the high altar of the said St. John, helping the said master and his successors to sing and read in the choir there every holy day in the year divine service, praying especially for the souls of Peter Saddler and his wife." The priest was to have board at the Hospital, or 40 shillings a year in lieu of board, and such salary as the Stewards agreed, and a chamber found him "within the said St. John." In the Subsidy list of the Diocese of Lincoln for 1526, "Dom: Willelmus Walton Curatus Leicester Johannis," was assessed on an income of £4.

The Hospital with its church and all its lands passed by Queen Elizabeth's charter of 1589 to the Mayor and Burgesses of Leicester. Part of the site was used for the purpose of a Wool Hall, being leased for life in 1592 to the philanthropic Thomas Clarke with that object; but afterwards the building reverted to charitable uses. On an adjoining portion of the land the Town Gaol was constructed, which was pulled down in 1792. The ruins of the old church then came to light again, and were sketched by Throsby, who gave a full description of them. They comprised an arch, which he calls "Saxon," and several pillars and parts of walls.* The nave was 17 feet 4 inches broad, and 41 feet long. Four large oak beams had been laid on the capitals of the pillars, to support the floor when it was converted into a prison, and Throsby conjectured that they had been used originally to uphold the roof of the church.

* This arch was placed by Throsby in his garden. In my copy of Throsby's History of Leicester an old note has been written, stating that the arch was afterwards "in Mr. Berridge's garden."

(7) THE CHAPEL OF WIGSTON'S HOSPITAL.

The Hospital of St. Ursula, founded by William Wigston, was built at the west end of St. Martin's churchyard, and, on the south side of the building, next to Peacock Lane, stood the chapel, which was put up about 1515, and " restored " in 1730. Nichols has the following description of it. " The chapel of this hospital was originally a beautiful little Gothic building ; the stalls, screen, and loft of oak, neatly finished. On the outside, the great south window, very noble, is between two rich canopies. . . . The South window originally contained much fine painted glass ; which in 1760 was greatly defaced ; but so lately as 1790 several fragments remained." Nichols describes the windows, and gives the monumental inscriptions. " Such was the state of the chapel in 1790. On a review in 1807, I find that the whole has been repaired. The East and West windows, I am sorry to say, have been blocked up ; and the fine old South window replaced by a modern one, in which only five small pieces of the painted glass are retained. The small gallery has also been plastered over, and whitewashed. The whole, however, still looks very neat."

Nichols gives two illustrations of the chapel, as it was in his time. There is a good representation of it, as it appeared in 1875, just before its destruction, in " Glimpses of Ancient Leicester."

In an agreement made by deed, soon after its foundation, between the Abbot of Leicester, the Vicar of St. Martin's, and the Master and Confrater of the Hospital, it was agreed that the Vicar should administer the Sacraments to the poor people and visit them " as they do their other parishioners when there is need," and should bury their bodies in the churchyard when dead ; and that the Abbot and Vicar should permit the Master and Confrater to celebrate divine service in the chapel, and not compel them to be present at divine service in St. Martin's church or churchyard, or to administer the sacraments to the parishioners or to swear obedience to them.

When Queen Elizabeth, at the request of the Earl of Huntingdon, made new Statutes for the government of the house, after

Screen from Chapel of Wigston's Hospital
— Now in Ockbrook Church —

the dissolution, it was provided that the Hospital should in future be called " William Wigston's Hospital," and should not thereafter bear the name of " any fancied saint or other superstitious name," and that it should be one of the duties of the Confrater, or " Brother," to see that the poor went every dominical day and weekday to morning and evening prayer at St. Martin's church, but he might upon urgent cause say prayers in the chapel belonging to the hospital. The chapel remained in use until the hospital was removed, in 1869, to the present buildings on the Fosse Road. Shortly after that date, in 1875, in spite of the strenuous opposition of the Leicestershire Archaeological Society, it was ruthlessly destroyed. Painful, indeed, it is to contemplate a drawing, given in the Transactions of that Society, which delineates the fine old building, stripped of the Inmates' apartments, and presenting the appearance of a beautiful mediaeval Hall, now lost for ever.

The monuments were removed to the chapel of the new hospital. One of the " rich canopies " mentioned by Nichols was placed on a wall in the north aisle of St. Nicholas' church, and most of the old woodwork was transferred to the chapel of Trinity Hospital. The fine screen of dark oak had been taken away during the early nineteenth century " restorations," and was put up in the year 1810 at Ockbrook Church, near Derby. The site of the original chapel of Wigston's Hospital has been railed off, at the corner of the playground of Wigston's School, and a stone slab in the centre serves to remind the passer-by of its former significance.

(8) THE CHURCH OF ST. LEONARD.

The foundation of the Hospital of St. Leonard at Leicester is assigned by Henry of Knighton to William, the youngest son of Robert Blanchmains, Earl of Leicester, who was a Leper. Nichols felt some doubt about this, thinking that perhaps William the Leper founded only the Spital in the East Suburb, near St. John's chapel, and not the larger hospital beyond the North Bridge. But Henry of Knighton would be sure to know who was the traditional founder of the hospital which lay next door to his own Abbey. The church was, no doubt, built at

the same time, for the chapel of St. Andrew, which was in St. Leonard's church, " in ecclesia Hospitalis," was also ascribed to William Leprosus. The Church is first heard of in 1220, and belonged to the Abbey, which received about £6 10s. 0d. from the revenues of the rectory. The vicarage, however, was so small that it would not adequately sustain a vicar, and the Abbot therefore arranged, in 1437, with the consent of the Bishop of Lincoln, that any chaplain appointed by the Abbot should serve the cure, instead of a resident vicar, receiving 53 shillings and 4 pence a year out of the revenues of the rectory.

Almost the only incident connected with this church which is recorded in the annals of the borough is a charge of burglary, reported in the Coroner's roll for 1297-8. Geoffrey the Mason, in conjunction with some other persons, who escaped, stole from St. Leonard's church the vestments, surplices, books, and other church ornaments, all of which were found in Geoffrey's possession. The small value then placed upon the church's goods (three shillings), quite bears out the tradition which affirmed that it was a church of little size or importance. Two centuries later, it seems to have been in a poor way. At the Episcopal Visitation of 1509, a presentment was made that John Birmingham, the vicar of St. Leonard's, had allowed a parishioner to die unconfessed, and without the eucharist, and that he did not read the *generales sententiae*, (a commination service,) nor expound the articles of the Christian faith. The vicar stated that he did not possess a copy of the *generales sententiae*. At the Visitation of 1526, when John Baston was vicar, the church was poorly furnished and badly served. It then possessed only two altar-cloths for the High Altar, and no linen covering at all for Our Lady's Altar. It had no manuale, (containing the services of extreme unction, baptism, etc.,) no canopy for the pyx, no vessel for frankincense, and no lucerna. Divine service was not well attended, and was frequently interrupted by disorderly and irreverent persons. The vicar himself, it would seem, sadly neglected his duties, and the parishioners said that he ought to be suspended. An attempt had then lately been made to raise some money for the church by means of a Robin Hood's Play and through that popular performance forty shillings had been collected. But the man

who received this sum—one John Laverock—refused to account for it, and it may never have reached the church. In the Subsidy List of 1526 " Dom : Rogerus Slatter " appears as " Curatus" of St. Leonard's, so John Baston had probably been suspended. Slatter was assessed on an income of £5 6s. 8d. In a list of Leicester vicars made out probably a few years later, the name of the vicar of St. Leonard's is left blank.

The parish of St. Leonard was outside the Borough Walls, beyond the North Gate, the little old church standing at the junction of Woodgate and Abbeygate, opposite St. Sunday Bridge. By her second charter of 1599, Queen Elizabeth placed the parish under the jurisdiction of the Town. The church had then fallen into a rather ruinous condition. Some thirty years afterwards an attempt was made to collect money for repairing it. The Brief issued for that purpose stated that " the steeple hath been theretofore a fair square steeple, but the foundation not being very good, for that it was made of soft mouldering stone, it so happened that the said steeple was, by a most violent tempest of wind, blown down ; so that with the fall the middle aisle and north side of the church were so shaken and decayed in the main timber that it cannot be long upheld. Charge £510." Throsby, followed by Nichols, said that the church was then rebuilt, but this is doubtful. It was still standing in the year 1634. Sir John Lambe then noted that the steeple was " all down," and that there was at that time " no curate certain, but it is served sometimes by Mr. Ward, the vicar of All Saints, and sometimes by Mr. Richardson the Preacher, who is also curate of Belgrave." The church was, however, in regular use apparently up to 1640 or later. The lists of baptisms, marriages and burials, which took place there between 1632 and 1639 inclusive, and in some earlier years, are still extant, signed by Nicholas Parker, curate, and the two churchwardens. It seems to have had no vicar at that time, and shortly afterwards, during the tempest of civil war, the building was entirely demolished. In the early part of the eighteenth century, the Hospital, " pro sex viduis," was in existence, but there was no incumbent, " ecclesia caret," and the parish was united with that of All Saints. All that remained at the end of the eighteenth century

was the little churchyard with some few grave stones. " At the foot of the North Bridge, in an area enclosed by a low wall, and distinguished by a few scattered gravestones, the churchyard of St. Leonard's meets the eye."

A new church of the same name was built in the 19th century on part of the old site. In the Old Town Hall Library of Leicester, there is a copy of Cranmer's Bible, printed in 1553, which contains the following M.S. note. " Mr. Rudiarde is witness that this Byble apertaineth to the Parishe of St. Leanordes anno Domini 1581, E.C."

(9) THE CHURCH OF ST. SEPULCHRE, OR ST. JAMES'S CHAPEL.

The church of the Holy Sepulchre was situated beyond the south wall of the town, on a site now occupied by the Royal Leicester Infirmary. It belonged to the church of St. Mary of the Castle, and was served probably by one of the chaplains who assisted the Vicar of St. Mary's. The church was in existence before the end of the 12th century. It faced the public gallows, and the bodies of those who were hung were generally buried within its cemetery. In two cases the corpses revived. In the year 1363, according to Henry of Knighton, Walter Wynkbourn was hanged at Leicester, at the instance of the preceptor of Dalby, and when he was taken down from the gallows, and was being carried for dead to the cemetery of St. Sepulchre at Leicester to be buried, he began to come to life again, and was carried into the chapel, and there guarded by a Leicester priest. It happened that the King, Edward the Third, was then staying at Leicester Abbey ; and, when he heard of this strange occurrence, he sent Wynkbourn a free pardon, saying, in Henry's presence, " God has given thee life, and I will give thee a charter of mercy." Ten years later, another man, named Peter King, was not so fortunate. He revived, as he lay before the high altar of the church ; but, on this occasion, the convict was promptly dragged out of the church again, and incontinently rehanged.

The church was used once as a sanctuary by some thieves who had been robbing the Abbot of Leicester. In front of the building stood an image, at which it was customary for wayfarers to make a small offering. A " parochia Sancti Sepulchri " is mentioned in a rental of Lord de Grey, which is undated, but probably of the 14th century. It was at St. Sepulchre's that the view of frankpledge for the South Gate, or South Quarter, of the town was held every year on the 31st of December.

The change of name took place at the beginining of the 16th century. " Sepulchre's church " occurs in a list of 1492, but from the Visitation of the Bishop of Lincoln in 1510, it appears that the name had by that time been altered, and moreover that the building was then in bad repair. Kelly conjectured that the chapel of St. James formed part of St. Sepulchre's church, but in the report of the Bishop's Visitation it is distinctly described as " capella S. Jacobi *dudum* vocat' ecclesia S. Sepulchri." A Hermitage stood on the opposite side of the road, adjoining a spring of water, which long retained the name of " Chapel-well." The old name of the church lingered side by side with the new, for in the rent roll of the Corpus Christi Guild for 1519, it is described by both. There is a rent from " a close beside St. James' church," and a chief rent from " a croft beside Sepulchre church." In 1484 " St. Sepulchre's church " had formed the boundary of one of the town wards, but in 1557 the name given to the limit of this ward was " St. James' chapel." The little church was existing in 1572, but it was then probably no more than a ruin. Nichols said that some of its walls were standing within the memory of persons living in the time of the Rev. Samuel Carte, who died April, 1740, aged 86. In the 17th century Sir John Lambe noted that St. Sepulchre's was a chapel to St. Mary's, but added " quaere, how now ? "

(10) ST. JOHN'S CHAPEL AT THE TOWN'S END.

There was a chapel in Belgravegate in connection with the old Leper Hospital there, which is said to have been founded, as well as St. Leonard's Hospital, by William the Leper, Robert Blanchmain's youngest son. This leperhouse was called " The

House of St. Edmund the Confessor and Archbishop." Archbishop Edmund died in 1240, and was not canonized until 1247; and therefore this hospital was not founded probably till after that year, though it seems rather doubtful whether William the Leper, whose father died in 1190, would still be living at that time. The hospital was in existence certainly before 1250, for it was recorded in the Register of Croxton Abbey, that before that date " Galfridus abbas et conventus de Croxton " gave certain lands " Deo et beatæ Mariæ et domui Sci. Edmundi Confessoris et archiepiscopi in Leycestria et pauperibus fratribus ibidem manentibus." Geoffrey was Abbot of Croxton from 1242 to 1250.

Dedications to St. Edmund the Archbishop are very uncommon. St. Edmund's at Salisbury, and the chapel of St. Edmund at Gateshead are almost the only others in England known to Mr. A. Hamilton Thompson, but he thinks it probable that Sedgefield, in the county of Durham, was dedicated to him, as the annual feast was on the day of his translation. In this last case, where the church existed long before the archbishop, the dedication must have been changed, and it is of course possible, though improbable, that this may have been the case at Leicester. The Hospital chapel was generally known as the chapel of St. John the Baptist, and belonged to the Hospital of that name within the town.

In the arrangement made in 1464 between the Steward of the Guild of St. John and St. John's Hospital, it was agreed that the priest provided by that Guild should say or sing mass two days a week " in the chapel of St. John set at the townsend of Leicester." The little building was visited by John Leland about 1536. It stood, he said, by " the Bishop's water," for so the small stream was named which flowed into the Soar across Belgravegate under Our Lady's Bridge. " At this chapel," he added, " lyith Mr. Boucher."

Towards the close of the 14th century, William de Swinderby, the well-known Lollard, became Chaplain of St. John's Hospital at Leicester, and he and his companions, William Smith and Richard Waytestathe, made use of the little chapel at the town's end for the purpose of inculcating their own advanced views.

They turned the old chapel into a school where Lollard doctrines were taught. " Thus," says the orthodox Henry of Knighton, " the chapel that had once been dedicated to God was now made a receptacle and home for blasphemous heretics and enemies of the church of Christ."

The charter granted by Queen Elizabeth in 1589 comprised a conveyance to the Mayor and Burgesses of Leicester of " St. John's chapel at the end of Belgravegate with the chapel yard."

(11) THE CHAPEL ON THE WEST BRIDGE.

No mention is made of this little chapel in John Brid's account for the building of the West Bridge in 1325, nor does it occur in a list of Leicester churches and chapels compiled in 1344. But in the Mayor's account for 1365-6 there is an entry which refers to the roofing of " the chamber on the bridge." It was tiled with slates brought from the old Guild hall in Blue Boar Lane, which was then being rebuilt. It would seem therefore that the chapel was built between 1344 and 1365, during the revival of religious activity caused by the Black Death.

The chapel of Our Lady of the Bridge, or St. Mary de Brigge, was constructed over the eastern arch of the bridge. It belonged to the College of St. Mary of the Castle. William Lord Hastings, who was beheaded in 1483, by his will dated the 27th June, 1481, made bequest " that my executors do make and edify the chapel on the Bridge at Leicester, and for the making thereof one hundred pounds. Also that they find a priest in the same chapel by the space of seven years after my decease to say daily mass in the same chapel and other prayers as shall be ordained by my executors."

In the year 1523 the parish priest of Muston, having been found guilty of immorality, was sentenced by the Ecclesiastical Court, according to the report of the case, besides doing penance in the Cathedral church of Lincoln, to visit the chapel of the Blessed Mary on the South Bridge of the town of Leicester, and there repeat 150 Ave Marias on his bended knees, and to pay certain oblations. " Visitabit . . . capellam b̂tæ Mariæ super pontem australem villæ Leicestr et ib̂m dicet psalterium b̂tæ Mariæ genibus suis flexis . . . " The question therefore

arises whether there were two chapels of Our Lady on two Leicester bridges. known as the West and South, as some have concluded, or whether, in spite of this report, there was only the one chapel on the West Bridge, which is there called the South in error, or as an alternative name to distinguish it from its only important rival, the North Bridge of the town.

In the absence of further references to a South Bridge and chapel, it would appear more likely that the penance had to be performed on the West Bridge. Lord Hastings would not have spoken so simply of " the chapel on the Bridge at Leicester," had there been two bridge chapels in his time. Moreover in the year 1492-3 the Dean of St. Mary's Close was described as holding some ground " beside Our Lady of the Bridge." This refers, as Kelly pointed out in a written note on the record, to the chapel on the West Bridge, and the land could hardly have been so designated if there had been two chapels of Our Lady on two different bridges.

Some complaint seems to have been made in 1526 with regard to the conduct of the bridge priest at that time, but the passage in the Visitation referring to this matter is so corrupt as to be almost unintelligible.

On the outer wall of the chapel was an image of the Virgin Mary, and it was customary for the pious, when passing over the bridge, to make a small offering.

After ceasing to be used as a chapel, the little chamber over the West Bridge was turned into a small dwelling. By an Indenture bearing date the 20th day of September, 1598, the Mayor and Burgesses of Leicester conveyed to Robert Herrick of Mountsorrel, Glover, subject to a reserved rent, " one house some time called a chapel house situate and being on the south part or side of the West Bridge, on the *West* side or part thereof, and was late parcel of the possessions of the late College of the Blessed Virgin Mary near the Castle of Leicester." Nichols gives the following description of it. " On the southwestern side of the West Bridge is a dwelling house resting on its edge, the water passing under it through the arch nearest the town, and the brick part continuing above the water on stonework, once a chapel

with a bell on the southwest near the top, the frame of which still remains, though the window, through which it might play, is stopped up. Here two mendicant friars asked alms for the benefit of the neighbouring Priory." The Chapel was at the town end of the bridge, and not on its *West* side, as stated in Herrick's conveyance.

The old bridge with its quondam chapel was taken down in the year 1841.

(12) THE CHURCH OF THE ABBEY OF ST. MARY OF THE MEADOWS.

Little more than half-a-mile beyond the north walls of Leicester lay the Abbey of St. Mary of the Meadows, the church belonging to which, a massive edifice of the 12th century, stood on the north-western side of the monastic buildings. The cloisters were south of the church, and on the east of the cloisters stood the Chapterhouse. The Abbey church, according to the report of an eyewitness, was 140 feet in length and 30 feet wide, with a large cross aisle in the centre 100 feet long and 30 feet wide, and nearly as high as Westminster Abbey. It had a high square tower standing at the west end. The great western door, with a large window above it, opened on to Abbey Gate. The church and other buildings were all of stone, and roofed with lead.

The building of the church, commenced by the founder, Robert le Bossu, Earl of Leicester, was not completed in his lifetime, but was continued by his daughter-in-law, Petronilla, a daughter of Hugh de Grantmesnil, and wife of the next Earl, Robert Blanchmains. She is said to have built the nave at her own expense, and also to have given a rope, made of her own hair, by which a lamp was suspended from the roof of the choir. The solemn dedication of the church did not take place until the year 1279.

Although the Abbey was so magnificent and famous, " probably the wealthiest Augustinian house in England, with the exception of Cirencester Abbey," little has been recorded of its

church. Leland hardly mentions it. He states merely that a tomb, " ex marmore calchedonico," lay on the wall south of the high altar, and questions whether it was that of the founder, or of the countess Petronilla. But as the founder was buried, according to the testimony of one of the canons, on the right, or north side of the choir, the tomb which Leland saw cannot have been his ; and Petronilla was buried in the middle of the choir.

The church was very richly endowed with chantries and chapels and altars.

In 1323 John de Tours founded a chantry there, which he endowed with a considerable amount of land ; and in 1352 Simon de Islip, Archbishop of Canterbury, handsomely endowed another. In all there are said to have been four chantries.

The principal chapel, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, was enriched by pictures and fittings presented by William Geryn, a 14th century canon. Here Bishop Penny may have been buried ; and here, " in the middle of the chapel," lay the great Cardinal Wolsey.

On the south side of the church was the chapel of St. Augustine, and the altar of St. John the Baptist. Others recorded in Charyte's Rental are those dedicated to the Holy Trinity, St. Gabriel, St. Stephen, St. Michael, St. Leonard, St. Andrew, St. Katherine and St. Anne.

The ceiling of the choir, and that of the body of the church, were designed and painted about the year 1340, through the munificence of William Geryn.

At the Visitation of Bishop Alnwick, which took place in 1441, a sermon " of a very pretty fashion," was preached in the chapterhouse. The record of this Visitation may be read in Mr. A Hamilton Thompson's, " Visitations of Religious Houses in the Diocese of Lincoln," (II. 206-217). The Abbot was accused of witchcraft.

A few years after the tragic end of Cardinal Wolsey the Abbey was dissolved, and the church stripped of all its beauty. The peal of bells was then valued at £88, and the lead at £1,000. This is so enormous a sum, that the printer of Thompson's

History of Leicester seems to have substituted the word " land " for " lead," and he has thereby misled some later writers.

The church ornaments were sold with the " household stuff." Mr. Francis Cave, the Commissioner, reported to Lord Cromwell, in 1539, that the church was then undefaced, " and in the church," he said, " be many things to be made sale of, for the which it may please your lordship to let me know your pleasure, as well for the further sale to be made, as for the defacing of the church and other superfluous buildings which be about the monastery."

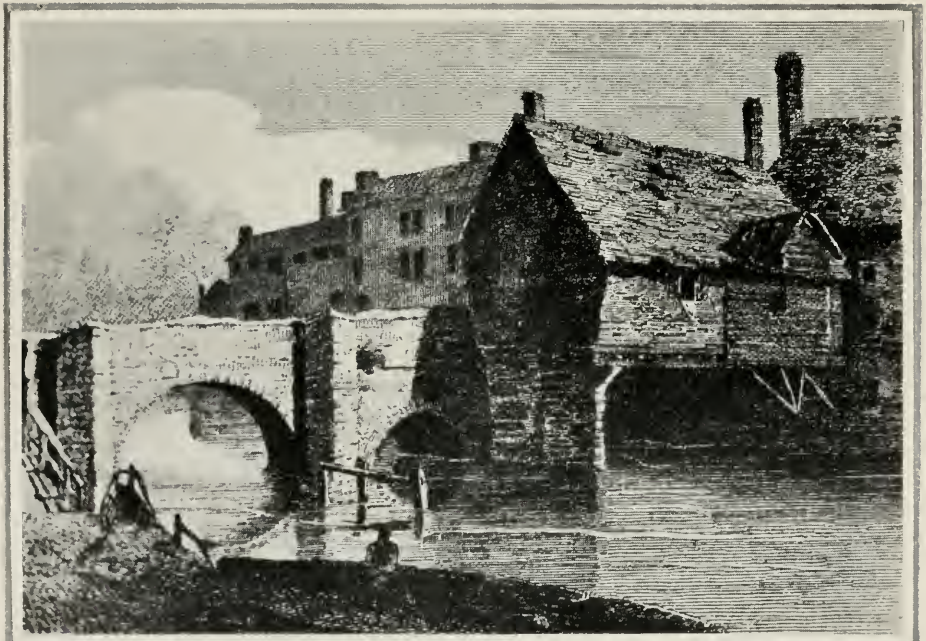
This letter was soon followed by the complete destruction of the Abbey church ; that is to say, it was bereft of everything saleable, and abandoned to decay.

VII.

THE SIX BRIDGES.

IN the autumn of the year 1392, William Mercer and William Spencer, we are told by Thompson in his History of Leicester (page 137), gave to the Mayor and community of Leicester divers houses, lands and tenements situate in Leicester, Whetstone and Great Glen, for the repair of the Six Bridges within the town of Leicester, and for other purposes. This statement need not, however, be taken too literally. It is possible, of course, that Messrs. Mercer and Spencer were public-spirited townsmen who wished to do well to their town, and to mend its bridges; but it seems far more probable that they were in reality more like what lawyers call sometimes, in their picturesque phraseology, "conduit-pipes." The transaction may be explained, perhaps, in the following way.

In the year preceding this grant, the Mortmain Acts had been extended for the first time to Boroughs, so that the community of Leicester were now prevented from holding any real estate, except by license. To obtain a license was a rather complicated and costly business. It would have been impossible, on that account, for the governing body of the town to buy small lots of property, and take separate conveyances of each. And so they seem to have deputed two of their members to buy up several lots of property on their behalf, and to take conveyances and assignments of each lot separately into their own names, as private persons, to whom the Mortmain Acts did not apply. For this purpose the town required the services of two men of good repute and proved honesty, and Mercer and Spencer, who were selected, no doubt answered to that description. Mercer had taken his father's seat in the Guild Merchant in 1365, and Spencer entered the Guild in 1368. They were thus men of some experience in municipal affairs, and that Spencer, at any rate, was a man of good standing is shown by his being elected Mayor of the town in the year 1399.



Old West Bridge with Chapel

These two men acquired, during the summer of 1392, a considerable amount of land, houses, rents and reversions. Two of the conveyances to them still extant are dated in the August of that year. The community then took steps to obtain a license that all this property might be assigned to themselves by one conveyance, as a grant from the persons then legally entitled.

In the first instance it was necessary for an Inquest to be held. When this was done, the Jury found that no loss would ensue from the proposed gift, but they pointed out that some of the Leicester property was held of the Duke of Lancaster, and the Whetstone land of Sir John de Beaumont, both tenants of the King. This inquisition is printed by Nichols, and an English translation will be found in Thompson's History of Leicester. Thereupon the King granted his license. A portion of this document is printed by Nichols, and an English abstract of the whole is given in the Borough Records. Richard II, " by special favour, and for £20 paid to him by the Mayor and Community of the town of Leicester," granted leave to William Mercer and William Spencer to give 8 messuages 15 cottages 2 shops 1 toft 6 virgates and 9 acres of arable land 6 acres and 1 rood of meadow and 25s. 9½d. yearly of rent and the rent of 1 cock and 2 hens, with their appurtenances, in Leicester, Whetstone and Great Glen, to be held by them and their successors " for the repair and bettering of the Six Bridges within the town of Leicester and for other burdens arising within the said town according to the ordinance of the grantors." They also had leave to grant the reversions of some other property situate in Leicester. The License is dated September 14th, 1392, and within three weeks from that date licenses were also obtained from the mesne lords mentioned by the Jury, " Prince John, Duke of Aquitaine and Lancaster," and " the reverend lord, the lord John of Beaumont," and a formal assignment of the property to the Mayor and Community of Leicester was duly executed.

The " repair and bettering of the Six Bridges " was put forward intentionally, as one of the good and charitable uses for which the property was acquired, but the Bridges had really

little or nothing to do with the matter. None of the acquired property was actually set aside for any such specific purpose, and the conveyance caused no alteration to be made in the community's way of financing these outlays, which, as we shall see, was largely effected by voluntary subscriptions. That the repair of bridges was used as a consideration to support the conveyance shows only the great importance which was ascribed to this municipal duty. To look after all the approaches to the Town Gates was an old and solemn obligation of the governing burgesses, and there was a special sanctity attached to the maintenance of bridges.

" The Six Bridges within the Town of Leicester " is a phrase which does not seem to occur elsewhere. It refers, one may suppose, to the same six bridges as those which are marked upon a certain plan of the Leicester Mills and Bridges, drawn about the year 1600, which is preserved among the archives of the Corporation, and which is reproduced in the third volume of the Borough Records.

According to this plan, the names of the Six Bridges are : (1) St. Sunday's Bridge, (2) Frogmire Bridge, (3) West Bridge, (4) Bow Bridge, (5) Braunston Bridge, and (6) an anonymous " Bridge."

(1) ST. SUNDAY'S BRIDGE.

This bridge crossed the main stream of the river Soar, north of Leicester, opposite to the ancient church of St. Leonard, and the bifurcation of the high road. It is described in a conveyance of the year 1493 as " The Great Bridge," and it was sometimes so called in later centuries, but in the Borough Records it is usually named the North Bridge from the 13th century until the 16th. The monks would seem to have given to it the name of St. Dominic, the founder of the Dominican Order of Preaching Friars, who was canonized in 1234. This name passed into familiar speech as " St. Sunday Bridge," or " St. Sunday's Bridge," Sunday being the English equivalent of " Dominicus." It is so called in 1550, " Sent Sonday brygg," in Queen Elizabeth's Charter of 1589, and later. Throsby calls it

" Sunday Bridge, formerly Sanvis Bridge " ; and Nichols says that, in his time, it was commonly called " St. Sunday's Bridge." In modern days it has reverted to its old designation of " North Bridge."

The old North Bridge is mentioned in extant deeds of the 13th century, and occurs in the Mayor's account for 1307-8, when one of the arches was mended. It was paved with stone in 1319, and again in 1365. Leland described it as comprising " 7 or 8 arches of stone " ; but in later years, at any rate, there were ten. It was repaired from time to time, and stood for several centuries. Throsby, writing in 1791, said that the bridge was then " patched with repairs at various periods ; the fence walls thereon are low and dangerous." The Rev. William Bickerstaffe, who died in 1789, left the following description of it. " The North Bridge, now commonly St. Sunday's Bridge, has eight wet arches, the midmost high and wide ; two more on the town side, small and useless, obstructed on both sides by dyers' buildings, and made-ground. It is 98 yards one foot long, five yards two feet wide ; parapet walls about a yard high, their thickness one foot two inches. One of its arches, the nearest the town, is pointed ; the other nine are round. From the top of the parapet to the water is four yards three quarters ; the common depth of the water 1 yard 8 inches, near the middle of the bridge, by the middle of the arch." In February, 1795, a great flood almost entirely demolished it ; and, in the following year, a new stone bridge, of three arches, was erected in its place. A good illustration of this beautiful structure was given by Nichols at the beginning of the 19th century. Its life was but short, for it was pulled down and rebuilt in the years 1867 and 1868.

(2) FROGMIRE BRIDGE.

This bridge, by which the high road to the north crossed a small arm of the river, a little south of the North Bridge, was known from the 14th century as " The Little North Bridge," or " The Little Bridge."

It is called Little Bridge in 1592; but in the Corporation Records for 1611, it is named "Frogmire Bridge," and the island between the two bridges is still known as Frog Island. It seems to have been once a wooden bridge; at any rate, timber is the only material that is mentioned in the early repairing accounts. In 1541 a post and rail were provided.

(3) THE WEST BRIDGE.

This bridge, which spanned the Soar just beyond the West Gate, has always been so named. It may have been built, as Mr. Kelly conjectured, by Robert de Beaumont, Earl of Leicester. At any rate the Eastern arch of the bridge, or its foundations appear to have been undoubtedly of Norman architecture. It was reconstructed in 1325, of stone and timber, at a cost of more than £28; and again, in 1365, it was thoroughly overhauled, and, either then or shortly before that time, a little chapel was built over its Eastern arch. The old bridge was taken down in April, 1841. Both Throsby and Nichols say that it had four arches, but in Lee's beautiful drawing, which was made just before its destruction, there are only three. The bridge was replaced in the following year by a wider one costing over £4,000. This, in its turn, has been superseded, in recent years, by an elaborate structure of iron, erected about 1890, at a similar expense

(4) THE BOW BRIDGE.

This bridge crossed the arm of the river known as the Old Soar, past the West Bridge, and beyond the Priory of the Austin Friars. It may have taken its name from a foot-bridge, which stood a few yards to the North-west, also known as Bow Bridge, "because it consisted of one large arch like a bow." This foot-bridge belonged to the monastery of the Austin Friars, and was used by the monks when they went to and from St. Austin's Well. It was swept away by a high flood in 1791.

Bow Bridge was repaired in 1666 at a cost of £15 12s. 0d. The restored structure comprised five semi-circular arches, and it was, in Throsby's opinion, "the most uniform bridge at

Leicester." It was built of stone, like the other large bridges, but in his day they were all, with the exception of Bow Bridge, patched with brick. This bridge was about 23 yards long and 6 feet wide, with niches at intervals on both sides, in which foot-passengers could stand when carriages were passing; and there were piers, with cut-waters, beneath the niches. Tradition has recorded that, when the monastery of the Grey Friars was dissolved, the remains of Richard the Third were taken from his tomb, and thrown over the Bow Bridge into the river Soar. He was said to have marched to Bosworth's fatal field across the same bridge, where an old woman, sitting by the way, foretold his doom. From these traditions connected with it, it gained the name of King Richard's Bridge, and was so called by Throsby, who gave a good illustration of it, but the best drawing of the bridge is one made by Dr. Lee, and published in Kelly's "Royal Progresses." About the year 1784, after a carriage crossing it had been all but swept away by the flooded stream, it was widened with brick-work. In 1863 it was rebuilt, and again widened, at a cost of £932. A tablet was then placed above the bridge bearing this legend: "Near this spot lie the remains of Richard III, the last of the Plantagenets."

(5) BRAUNSTON BRIDGE.

This bridge, which crossed the old Soar, south of Bow Bridge, is mentioned in 1317, when "Thomas the Chapman was killed by several men while crossing the bridge to his house in Brunkynesthorp." Brunkynesthorp, or Bromkinsthorpe, was the old name of Braunstone Gate.

The old stone bridge of four high-pointed arches, was 51 yards in length, and from 3 yards 28 inches to $5\frac{3}{4}$ yards wide. The parapet walls were a yard high. It was widened with brick in 1792, and a new bridge of iron, costing about £4,000, was erected about 1884.

(6) COW BRIDGE.

This bridge, which crossed the New Cut, south of the Newarke and north of St. Mary's Mill, is anonymous in the plan

referred to. It may be the same as a bridge, mended by the Mayor's orders in 1338-9, which he described as " the bridge towards the church of St. Sepulchre." It is mentioned in 1360 as " the bridge towards Aylestone which is called Coubrigg." Two hundred years later it is called " Cowpasture Bridge," and " Cowhey Bridge." It led to the ancient common pasture, known as Cowhey, so frequently mentioned in the history of the town, part of which is now the Freemen's Meadow.

There were some other small bridges that were occasionally repaired by the Corporation. Among these may be mentioned St. Anthony's Bridge, in Senvey Gate, and the little bridge outside the East Gate, both crossing the Town Ditch ; and the Spital-house Bridge or " Lady Bridge," in Belgrave Gate, repaired in 1569 and 1600 ; which seems to be the bridge described by Leland as " a meane stone bridge," and " a little beyond it," he says, " is another stone bridge, through the which passit a litle land broke, cumming from villages not far of, and so rennith into Bishop's water." This little streamlet is now known as Willow Brook. There were also apparently two bridges in Humberstone Gate, one of which was known as the Antelope Bridge ; and there was a " bridge at the Clay Pit."

The Leicester Bridges emerge into the light of history in the middle of the 13th century, when the independent burgesses of the town, resenting certain taxes, known as " Bridge-silver," and " Gavel-pence," took steps to obtain their remission. In the first place, an Inquest was held, purporting to enquire into the origin of these taxes. The Leicester Jurats told two stories, one relating to gavel-pence, the other to bridge-silver. Both are interesting, and, as they are intimately connected, it may be well to give both.

The gavel-pence story runs thus : " In the time of Robert of Meulan, then Earl of Leicester, it happened that two kinsmen, to wit Nicholas Hakon's son and Geoffrey Nicholas' son, of Leicester, waged a trial by battle for a certain land, about which a plea had arisen between them, and they fought from the hour of Prime to the hour of Noon, and longer, and so fighting with

each other, one of them drove the other as far as a certain little ditch, and as the other stood over the little ditch and was about to fall into it, his kinsman said to him, ' Mind you don't fall into the ditch behind you,' and immediately there arose such a clamour and such a tumult among the spectators standing and sitting round, that the lord Earl heard their noise even in the Castle, and then asked some people what the noise was, and he was told that two kinsmen were fighting about a piece of land and one of them drove the other as far as a certain little ditch, and as he stood over the ditch and was about to fall into it, the other warned him. The burgesses then, *moti pietate*, agreed with the lord Earl that they would give him 3d. a year from each house which had a gable looking on to the High Street, on condition that he would grant that all pleas touching them should henceforth be treated and determined by 24 jurats who were appointed in Leicester of old time ; and this was granted to them by the Lord Earl and thus first were raised the pence that are called gavel-pence (*govelpeniis*). After the death of this Earl Robert, Robert, his son and heir, succeeded, who for the health of his father's soul entirely remitted the aforesaid pence which are called Gavelpence, and by his charter gave a quit-claim for ever. The aforesaid charter, with many other writings and charters, was put in the keeping of a certain burgess and clerk who was called Lambert, against whom evil-doers arose in the night, because he was thought to be rich, and they burned his houses and even the feet of the man himself, (*etiam pedes ipsius*), together with the aforesaid charter and many other writings. Some time after, there was a certain clerk in this town of Leicester, by name Simon Maudit, who, for some time after the death of the aforesaid Robert, Earl of Leicester, who made the charter of quitclaim, had the reeveship of Leicester in farm, and collected and exacted the said pence called gavelpence by force and at his own will, distraining all who refused to pay, bidding them show him a warranty of quitclaim, for he knew very well that the quitclaim was burnt, so they are paid to this very day."

With regard to bridge-silver, the Jurats reported as follows : " In the time of the same Earl Robert, the forest of Leicester was

so great, thick and full, that it was scarcely possible to go by the paths of that forest, on account of the quantity of dead wood and of boughs blown down by the wind, and then by the will and consent of the Lord Earl and of his Council, it was allowed to those who wished to look for dead wood, to have six cart-loads for 1d. and a horse-load a week for ½d., and a man's load a week for ¼d., and these moneys were collected first at the exit of the wood, afterwards outside the town of Leicester nearer to the wood, and then these moneys were collected at the bridges of the town of Leicester, where at first there was a certain keeper called Penkrich, to whom the Lord Earl at his request afterwards granted a certain space near the bridge on which to build, that there he might collect the custom more conveniently. And this Penkrich for some time after collected the said moneys both for green wood and felled wood which used to be paid for dead wood only, and so afterwards it passed into a custom. And that the truth of this inquest may appear the more clearly and be the more obvious, it can well be perceived by the fact that strangers from whatever part they may have come, carrying wood or timber, whether it be from the forest of Arden or from Cannock Chase or from Needwood forest, or whoever they might be, pay no pontage, nor ever used to pay it, those only excepted who came from Leicester forest."

Now these inquiries were not instituted, as Mr. J. H. Round has already pointed out, in order to ascertain the historical truth about these matters. They were really pieces of special pleading, which aimed at obtaining a remission of these two taxes on the best terms possible. The burgesses tried to show (1) that the taxes had been granted or imposed in comparatively recent times by, and on, the predecessors of the respective parties concerned, in circumstances which pleaded in favour of their remission, and (2) that they had already been actually revoked or, at least, that their collection was attended with injustice and fraud. The findings of the Jury cannot therefore be accepted at their face value. The tale of the two kinsmen's battle sounds like a genuine tradition, which had been in the mouths of Leicester people for many a year ; but the application of it made

by the Jurats is another matter. As soon as we come to the romantic story of the burglary and the lost charter, we feel the ground slipping under us. With regard to gavel-pence, or govel-pence, Mr. Round has pointed out that this tax was a Saxon service of immemorial antiquity, the " customary tribute " due from the tenant to the lord, commuted into a money payment. He gives several instances from Oxford, Winchester, Chester and elsewhere. The Anglo-Saxon word *gafol*, meaning a gift (German, *gaben*.) was joined to the word *penniis*, or pence, when the service became a tribute in money. The Latin equivalent is *gablum*. But *gablum*, Mr. Round thinks, may have suggested to the enquiring Jurats themselves, or to a former generation of guessers, the *gable* of a house, and hence came the story, familiar in all our histories of Leicester, about the tax of three pennies paid for every gabled house standing in the High Street. He concludes that the tax did not originate in a bargain about the Portmanmote, as the burgesses of the 13th century tried to make out, nor was it remitted by a charter that had been destroyed, nor was it afterwards illegally enforced by Simon Maudit.

Whatever we may think of Mr. Round's ingenious etymological theory, we cannot doubt that the Jurats knew quite well, and correctly stated, who paid the tax about which they were enquiring. It seems clear that at the time of the Inquest the Earl was levying an imposition called govelpence upon the dwellers in the High Street, but this tax, however it may have become so incident, was in fact pre-Norman both in name and origin, and consequently it cannot have been imposed by Earl Robert in the circumstances related by the Jury. The gable of a house in mediæval Latin is sometimes " *gabulla*," but in the language of the Inquest it is " *gablus*." Mr. Round points out that the Jurats maintain the English name of the payment, " govelpence," which is fatal to the pretended " gable " derivation, " for," he says, " though govel is an easy corruption from *gafol* or *gavel*, it cannot be a corruption from *gable*." On the other hand, their use of the form " govelpeniis " would seem to tell against the suggestion that the form *gablum*, and its supposed derivation from *gablus*, was in their minds.

Mr. Round seems to imply that Simon Maudit (whom he misnames "Hugh") was an "unscrupulous bailiff" invented by the Jurats, "on whom they bestow the appropriate name of Hugh the Accursed (Hugo Maudit)." But Simon Maudit was a real person: a son of his entered the Guild Merchant in 1209. The toll-collector was only too genuine: the Jurats' point was that his actions were wrong.

All this has nothing to do directly with bridges, but the same Jurats were also enquiring at the same time into the origin of bridge-silver. If suspicion rests upon one of their findings, its shadow is thrown over the other. Our doubts are again raised when we find that, in the case of bridge-silver, the Leicester burgesses tried to make out a plea exactly similar to that which they presented with regard to gavel-pence. They would have it that the impost was an exaction created by a Norman Earl, and that there had been grave irregularities in its collection. But their story cannot be accepted. The "pontagium," as its name denotes, was a toll paid for the making and upkeep of bridges, as at Nottingham and elsewhere, and had nothing to do with the wood collected in Leicester Forest.

The burgesses secured from Simon de Montfort a charter abolishing both pontage and gavelpence; but, in spite of their eloquent pleading, they were compelled to pay rather heavily for it. Besides having to make a certain annual payment, which appears in the charter of redemption, they were also obliged to buy up, and hand over to the Earl, some rents that cost a considerable sum. They gave, for instance, 33 marks (£22), for a rent that had been paid to Simon de Salcey. A loan was raised among themselves to enable the town to make these payments.

It is not clear that the proceeds of bridge-silver were made use of by the Earl in providing the cost of building and repairing bridges, though Kelly thought that Earl Robert de Beaumont imposed the tax in order to cover the cost of building the West Bridge. The community had certainly taken a large share in this work long before Simon de Montfort's charter. In the earliest rolls of the Guild Merchant that have come down to us, dated from the end of the 12th century, we read of money being contributed "ad opus pontis," or "ad pontes emendandos."

The North Bridge and the Little Bridge were constantly under repair, as no doubt they had the hardest use. In one year the Mayor, Henry de Rodington, advanced more than £2 to mend the Leicester bridges, and the amount was afterwards repaid to him by the Guild. The money was raised in various ways ; usually out of a tallage made for general purposes, but sometimes from a tallage specially assessed, as in 1302. But a good deal was raised from voluntary contributions.

In early days, when bridges were rare, and warmed a spark of gratitude in the traveller's heart, they used to be regarded with some feeling of piety, and the old religious associations of the bridge lingered in mediæval custom. The making and repairing of bridges was one of the seven works of Corporal Mercy, and Religious Guilds would subscribe freely to this object. Thus, in 1525-6, the Guild of Corpus Christi at Leicester gave 10s. 7d. " for reparations done at St. Sunday's Bridge." In fact, there are, underlying the common beliefs and practices concerning bridges and bridge-sacrifice, primitive religious traditions of immemorial antiquity. In mediæval times, when these old superstitions had been incorporated in the Christian faith, many persons built bridges for the salvation of their souls ; and it was not unusual to dedicate a bridge to some saint, or to erect a chapel upon it, as at Nottingham and Northampton and Leicester. Private citizens would remember the bridges in their wills. Thomas de Beeby, for instance, a Leicester burgess who died about 1383, left a legacy of forty shillings to each of the North and West Bridges. And, nearly two centuries later, Thomas Davenport, who was chosen Mayor of Leicester in 1553, by his will gave £5 for amending the bridges and highways about Leicester, " the which is to be done at the sight of mine executors." These ancient sentiments could be appealed to when bridges wanted mending. Thus, in 1325, when John Brid built the West Bridge, he received the greater part of the money required from voluntary offerings ; " £15 11s. 10½d. received of Ralph Gerin from oblations at the Cross, with the sale of wax at the feast of Holy Cross, as appears by an indenture, and 8s. 4d. for wax sold to William the Palmer,

to William of Stapleford and others, and £1 13s. 0d. received of Ralph Gerin from his collection, and £2 9s. 7½d. received from the collection in the town." The rest of the money required to make up the total cost of £23 17s. 10d., viz., £3 10s. 0d., he received " of John Alsy, Mayor, by tally." We also hear of money being collected for this purpose in the Parish Churches of the town, and generally of " gifts and perquisites to the bridges of Leicester." Sometimes the fines inflicted by the Guild Merchant were ear-marked for this pious use, as when John Joy, in 1357, was condemned to pay 6s. 8d., " in aid of the bridges of the town " ; and when it was ordained that for every beast found trespassing in the crofts within the town of Leicester, 4d. for every head, and 1d. for every foot, should be paid " for mending of the bridges, ways, gates and other necessaries for the common utility of the town."

In 1574 it was agreed that the Mayor and common burgesses should give 2s. apiece, and the Fortyeight 1s. apiece, towards (inter alia) " the repairing of the bridges." Surveyors of bridges refusing to serve were to forfeit 10s., " which shall go to the use of the said bridges."

In 1365 the North Bridge and the West Bridge were repaired. The former cost £4 8s. 0d., and the latter £4 8s. 7d. The expense of these repairs was borne by the common fund, with the assistance of (1) a special toll of the North Quarter, (2) collections made in the churches of St. Martin, St. Nicholas, and St. Peter, and (3) private donations. The total cost of the two bridges being £8 16s. 7d., £3 4s. 8d. was provided by voluntary contributions, and the remainder from the general fund (tallage and guild entries), and a special toll.

As a result, probably, of the disturbances related by Henry of Knighton, which occurred in the neighbourhood of Leicester Abbey in 1329, a grant of pontage for three years for the repair of the bridge at Leicester was obtained by the Earl in the following year. This tax was collected by one Geoffrey Ridel, who complained in 1332 before the Guild Merchant that he had been

threatened and disturbed in his office as toll-collector. The exaction was felt to be as vexatious as it had been in the previous century.

Before the end of the 14th century the repairs of bridges, as well as of all other town property, were placed in the hands of the two Chamberlains of the Borough.*

* Thompson's omission of the word "bridges," when he enumerated the duties of the Chamberlains, both in his History of Leicester, and also in his Municipal History, is a pure inadvertence.

VIII.

THE FAIRS AND MARKETS.

I. FAIRS.

THERE is no very rigid distinction between a "fair" and a "market"; but, when a market is larger, and recurs at more distant intervals than the ordinary daily or weekly mart, and particularly when it is frequented to some extent by persons coming from outside the place of meeting, it is generally called a "fair." Moreover, fairs, as the name denotes (Latin, *feriae*), are, or were, usually holidays, and the ordinary market is not.

A Fair of unknown origin used to be held at Leicester in June, for fifteen days, "on the eve, day, and morrow of St. Peter, &c."; but by a grant of Henry III, made in the year 1228-9, the date was altered to the second day of February, or the day of the Purification of Our Lady, and fourteen days after. It looks as if this were a popular institution, founded on ancient custom, for the King's Grant is addressed not to the Earl, but to the community at large, to the "good men of Leicester," "probis hominibus."

The Earl of Leicester had a fair of his own, granted in 1307, which was held on the morrow of the Feast of the Holy Trinity, and fourteen days following. The Charter is printed by Nichols. It was not granted in 1305 by Edward I, as Thompson states in his History, but by Edward the Second, in the first year of his reign. The writer of the article on "Leicester" in the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* goes still further astray in ascribing it to Edward III, and giving its duration as 17 days.

The two fairs afterwards granted by Henry the Eighth to the Town of Leicester may have been given in substitution for this fair of the Earl and the old people's fair. At any rate, the new sixteenth century fairs superseded them.

Column of Elizabethan Cross

The Earls of Leicester had also another fair, held on the Feast of the Invention of the Holy Cross, May the third (not on the Feast of the *Exaltation* of the Cross, Sep. 14th, as Miss Bateson inadvertently stated), and the fifteen days following. The toll of this fair was valued in the year 1327, after the death of Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, at £1 a year. This was no large sum ; nevertheless, William of Dunstable, who was Mayor of Leicester from 1357 to 1360, did his best to relieve the town from it, as well as from other vexatious imposts. In the year 1357 he went up to London, with some leading citizens of Leicester, and, after lengthy negotiations, succeeded in gaining his end as regards this fair. Their expenses came to £6 7s. 9¾d., a considerable sum in those days, and evidence of protracted business. The result of his efforts was a Royal Charter, bearing date the 2nd day of July, 1360, whereby the date of the fair was altered by King Edward III, from May to the three days before Michael mas Day, Michaelmas Day, and three days after, " in such a way that every native or stranger coming to the town and suburb of Leicester by reason of the aforesaid fair staying there and going away from thence shall be quit both at the said fair and also before and also for ever of toll, stallage, pickage, and other customs and tributes whatsoever." Furthermore, by a supplementary charter of August 15th, 1360, the Duke himself granted to the Mayor and burgesses of Leicester the entire ordering of the fair, and assignment of the stalls and plots, the management being placed in the hands of the Mayor and two or three burgesses chosen by the community to act as Stewards. He reserved, however, the " amercements and all other profits accruing to us in the said new fair, to be levied by the bailiffs of us and our heirs of the said town of Leicester, that is, the fines imposed at the Courts of the Fair." Subsequently John of Gaunt, by the Charter which he signed in 1375, expressly included in his grant to the Mayor, burgesses and commonalty of the town of Leicester, " all manner of profits of portmoots, *courts of the fair*, and of the market of the said town and suburbs," so that, from this time forward, all the rights and profits of this fair, as well as its management, were vested absolutely in the community of the town.

These Fair Courts, it may be remarked, were a rough and ready means of administering justice of peculiar interest. "From the end of the eleventh century onwards, the royal grant of license to hold a fair seems to have implied license also to hold a court of summary jurisdiction for offences committed at the fair itself. These obtained the name of Piepowder Courts (*pie-poudreux*, dusty feet—the suitors appearing informally in their travel-stained condition). In them a jury of merchants found the judgment and declared the law; thus suitors and doomsmen were all of the same class. England is the only country which possesses records of the proceedings at these Courts." Some pleas of the Leicester Piepowder Courts (placita nundinarum villæ Leycestriæ), of the time of Edward the Third, will be found in the second volume of the Borough Records.

Another fair was granted on April 2nd, 1473, by Edward the Fourth to the Mayor and burgesses dwelling in his town of Leicester. It was to be held there yearly for seven days, viz., three days before the feast of St. Philip and St. James (May 1st), on that feast, and for three days after. Strangers visiting this fair were to be quit of toll, stallage, pickage, and other customs belonging to the King or his heirs. The Mayor and two or three chosen for the purpose might make all arrangements for setting of stalls, etc.

The two last-mentioned fairs are the great pleasure-fairs which were held in Humberstonegate for many centuries, and which became known as the Leicester May Fair and the Leicester October Fair. The May Pleasure Fair used to begin, in the 19th century, on May 12th, and lasted eight days, including the 12th, and the October Pleasure Fair used to begin on October 10th, and lasted 9 days, including the 10th. Cheese Fairs were held on May 13th and Oct. 11th. But after the year 1895, or 1896, the times of the Pleasure fairs were altered, and they were held in late years on the second Thursday in May and October, and the three following days, *i.e.*, on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and the ensuing Monday, the cheese fairs taking place of late years on the second Thursdays in May and October. The stalls and shows occupied the strip of waste

ground on the south side of Humberstonegate called " No man's Land," which was let out to the holders by the owners of the adjoining houses for the periods of the fairs. The booths used to overflow, fifty years ago, round East Gates into the roadway of Cheapside and the Market Place. They contained a miscellaneous assortment of merchandize and " fairings"; and there were always in Humberstonegate a Menagerie and a Theatre, and various other exhibitions and amusements. The last Pleasure Fair in Humberstonegate was held in October, 1902. When these fairs were discontinued, a considerable sum was granted to the owners of property in Humberstonegate as compensation for their fair-rents. The Cattle Fairs held in May and October were ordered in 1774 to be in the present High Cross Street.

Two new Fairs were granted to the town by Henry VIII in addition to those formerly given by Edward III and Edward the Fourth. By Letters Patent, dated the 20th day of March, 1540, the King granted to the Mayor and burgesses of Leicester in perpetuity a fair at the same town and its suburb every year to last five days, viz., two days before the Nativity of St. John the Baptist (June 24th), on the day of the said Feast, and two days next following the said feast. At the same time he also gave them another fair at Leicester and its suburb every year to last five days, two days before the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (December 8th), on the day of the feast, and two days next following the said feast. Every native and foreigner coming to Leicester for the fair was to be quit of toll, stallage, pickage, &c., and the government of the fairs was confirmed to the Mayor and burgesses, and to be arranged by the Mayor and two or three of the best men of the town (" probioribus et melioribus hominibus "), elected and sworn.

Edward the Sixth, in the first year of his reign, confirmed the patents given by his ancestors, Edward III and Edward IV, for the Michaelmas Fair and the May Fair ; and Queen Mary confirmed both the Letters Patent of Henry VIII and the charter of Edward VI, assuring the two former fairs. Queen Elizabeth, in the first year of her reign, confirmed all four fairs, Midsummer, Christmas, May and Michaelmas.

The expense involved in obtaining the two sixteenth century fairs was defrayed by subscription. " The King having granted to the town two fairs (Midsummer Fair, and the Conception of Our Lady before Christmas), over and besides two fairs anciently granted by the King's progenitors ; Towards the charges of the charter under the great seal the Masters, Wardens and Stewards of the Guilds of Corpus Christi and St. Margaret's in the name of the brotherhood, gave £20 ; viz., each of the Guilds £10. And it was agreed that this should be registered in the Town Book, to remain for ever. Received of the Master and Stewards of Corpus Christi Guild towards the charges of labouring the King's Charter for two new fairs for the town of Leicester, £10 ; of the Guild of St. Margaret's, for the same, £10 ; of the Occupation of Bakers, 6s. 8d. ; of the Butchers, 26s. 8d.; of the Smiths, 13s. 4d.; in all, £22 6s. 8d. The Chamberlains paid to Mr. Barton, for riding to London and Waldyng, and for sealing the charter, £10 2s. 11d.; to Robert Cotton, for like charges, £9 14s. 10d.; to Mr. Gyllot, for the town's business, 6s. 8d.; to Mr. Wood, for the like, 6s. 8d.; to Mr. Bolte, for riding to London, 40s.; in all £22 11s. 1d. So that the town was at no more charge than 4s. 5d."

The four fairs used to be formally proclaimed at the High Cross. The Mayor, Corporation and Town Officials, followed by the Waits playing music, and by some of the poor men of the Trinity Hospital, " having rusty helmets on their heads, and breastplates fastened on their black taberdes," walked in procession through the main streets, and at the Cross the Town Clerk read the charter creating the Fair. This armed perambulation of fairs is a custom of very high antiquity. The Leicester ceremony is referred to by Nichols, and continued into the 19th century.

William Burton, writing in 1622, enumerates five fairs held at Leicester ; the two great fairs of May and Michaelmas, the two 16th century fairs of Midsummer and Christmas, and one other fair held upon Palm Sunday even. This Palm-Fair is also mentioned by Cox and Throsby ; and, according to the latter writer, there was then a considerable show of cattle. Thros-

by mentions a sixth fair as well, viz., Low Fair, which was also a market for cattle. In the year 1563 it was ordered that two Leather Fairs should be held " the morrow after Michaelmas Day and the morrow after May Day, and that proclamation thereof be made and the fair to be kept betwixt Saint John's Cross and the North Gate." St. John's Cross has been indentified with the Senvey Cross, but Kelly was evidently right in distinguishing them. It may be supposed that St. John's Cross stood near St. John's Hospital, the Leather Fair being held in that part of the High Street which lay between the Hospital and the North Gate.

In the course of the 18th Century, additional fairs for cattle and sheep were established in Leicester, on January 4th, June 1st, August 1st, September 13th, and November 2nd. The cattle stood in Millstone Lane, and the sheep in the Sheepmarket.

II. MARKETS.

THE WEDNESDAY MARKET.

From a very early time the country people who lived near Leicester were accustomed to bring their produce for sale in the High Street of the Borough ; and, as the centre of the ancient walled town was the junction of its four main streets which led to the four gates, the sellers naturally gravitated to that spot. A cross was standing there in the 13th century. It was repaired in 1278, and in 1306. In 1314 it was rebuilt, and the " Keeper of the High Cross " had stones brought from Waverton, to replace the old stones, which were taken away. The new cross was oiled and painted, and was surmounted by a weather cock. Figures of knights were brought from the old Mayor's Hall, and placed on the Cross with the aid of a windlass. At the beginning of the 14th century a weekly market was in vogue every Wednesday about this High Cross. In the reign of Henry VIII, bread was also sold there on Fridays, and the country people would bring in their eggs and butter on that day as well as on Wednesday.

A new and much more spacious erection was put up in the time of Queen Elizabeth, to serve both as a Cross and as a shelter for the market-women. A representation of this 16th century cross, which cost nearly £100, is given by Throsby. It

did not stand at the junction of the cross roads, but at a little distance to the North, and Throsby says that it extended " from the opening where the pillar now stands partly over the midway, which just left room for carriages to pass, from which extended the sign of the Horse and Trumpet, a large Inn." Cox described it as " an exquisite piece of workmanship." It was removed in 1773, and sold, in portions, for a few pounds. The largest part of it in one place supported, in Throsby's time, the dining-room at the Three Crowns Inn. One of its limbs was left to serve in the place of the old Market Cross until the year 1836, when it was taken away, and placed in front of the Crescent in King Street, where it still remains. The Wednesday Market was removed from its old quarters by the Leicester Corporation Act of 1884, when a part of the Market Place was set aside for the holding of a market " as a market for the sale of fruit, vegetables, plants, eggs, butter and poultry only between the hours of six in the morning and four in the afternoon on every Wednesday throughout the year."

THE SATURDAY MARKET.

A very ancient market was held at Leicester on Saturdays in the present Market Place, which locality, as early as 1298, was called " The Saturday Market." In a Conveyance of that year a house at Leicester is stated to be bounded on one side by " the lane which leads to the Saturday Market." In the year 1300 a man was charged with an offence committed " in foro Sabbati." In 1316 the Place is spoken of as the weekly market, " forum ebdomadale." The Market Place was more extensive in former centuries than it is now, and occupied all the South-eastern corner of the Town. It was bounded on the Northeast and Southeast by the Town Walls, and on the inside of the North-east wall ran a wide causeway, known as the Cornwall, where farmers used to show samples of their grain, and where horse-dealers displayed the paces of their animals. In the 16th century some part of the Cornwall was licensed for sheep-pens.

The opening and closing of the market seems to have been announced in old times by the ringing of a bell.

The old Special Markets mentioned in the Records of the Borough are the Grain Market, the Bean Market, the Sheep Market, the Swine Market and the Cattle Market, and, in later times, a Horse Fair and a Wool Market. The Hay Market was always held outside the walls, on account of the impossibility of waggons loaded with hay passing under the Gateways. In the Saturday Market the Butchers had their Shambles, which stood, in Elizabethan days, on the North-west side of the Market Place and North of the Gainsborough. A Fish Market was existing in the 14th century. There was also a " Housewife's Market," sometimes called the " Women's Market," and a Drapers' Market. In the Saturday Market the goods were generally, and for many years habitually, exposed to the weather on open stalls, but in the 15th century, shortly before 1440, a Market House was built, in which Butchers' Shambles were set up and stalls for clothiers and other tradesmen. This Market House was generally known as " Le Draperie," or " The Shambles and Draperie." All traders using it paid rents to the Duchy of Lancaster. The butchers, for instance, paid 1½d. for each stall.

At the time when Queen Elizabeth executed her first Leicester Charter of 1589, the Draperie was let on a thirty-one years Lease to Edward Catlyn, and the Queen conveyed the property to the Corporation of Leicester subject to the remainder of this Lease. But the drapers did not use the Market House greatly in those days, preferring to set up stalls in the open market. Consequently in the year 1601, the tenant, the widow of Edward Catlyn, had some difficulty in paying the rent. At any rate the Earl of Huntingdon wrote to the Mayor on her behalf, complaining that drapers were permitted to act in this way, so that " her Majesty's house," erected for their stalls, being " unfurnished " would soon be " ruinated." He therefore desired the Mayor to see to it that " such as offer wrong by absenting themselves from the draperie may by you be compelled to repair to the place for that use built."

The Gainsborough, which was erected some time before 1533, had no accommodation for stalls, except some shops, under a projecting balcony, which were let off to shoemakers.

There was a common pinfold in the Place, which stood on the site of the present Fishmarket. All cattle found straying were driven into it, and kept there until compensation had been paid for any damage.

The little octagonal " Conduit," which was nearly opposite to the Victoria Parade, dated from the beginning of the 17th century, although a scheme for bringing water to the town had been in existence long before. It was mended in 1689, at which time " Widow Brooks " was receiving 15s. a year " for opening and shutting the conduit doors daily."

The Grain Market is mentioned in 1314, when six posts were purchased by the Mayor, for the purpose of staking out its boundaries. It adjoined the Bean Market, for the two sites were in that year cleaned together, at an expense of 9d. The Sheep Market lay north of the Saturday Market, where Silver Street now runs, until the year 1506. It was then resolved by the Corporation that the Sheepmarket should be kept in the Saturday Market from May to Michaelmas, and that the profits should be for the use of the town. So successful was this experiment that two years later, it was enacted that the Sheepmarket should be " thenceforth holden still in the Market Place, and the profits be to behoof of the town." In future the profits of the Sheepmarket were let out for terms of years to private persons, the first rental fixed in 1508 being £3. In 1710 the rent had risen to £16, " and the parish levies." The sheep continued to be sold in the Market Place until the market for them was moved, sometime in the 19th century, to the site of the present Town Hall : thence it migrated to the new Cattle Market outside the town.

Beyond the earliest Sheep Market lay the Swinesmarket, which was held at first in what is now called High Street and the East Gate. But as that thoroughfare grew in importance, the presence of swine became undesirable, and they were removed, in 1524, to Parchment Lane, the modern Bond Street. Afterwards the mart migrated to Loseby Lane, which, in Nichols' time, was named The Pigmarket. In days yet later it was held in Free School Lane and West Bond Street, until the obnoxious

animals were removed altogether out of the town to the new Cattle Market.

A Cattle Market is mentioned in the Borough Records as early as 1341. It was held, apparently, in the Saturday Market; until it was resolved, at a Common Hall which met in the year 1597, "that the beast market shall from henceforth be kept in the lane called Cow Lane, Cank Street, and Loseby Lane, and not to be any more hereafter kept in the Saturday Market." No regular beast market, however, seems to have been established until the year 1763, when the Corporation made an Order "that a Market shall be opened on every Wednesday hereafter, in this Borough, for the sale of Fat and Lean Cattle." This was held, at first, in the Market Place, or near the East Gate, but in 1774 it was removed to Horsefair Street, "from the wall adjoining the Three Crowns Inn and to extend straight along the Millstone Lane." A few years later, the market was further extended "down the South Gate to the Horse Pool and also along the Welford Road to St. Mary's Workhouse or across Hangman Lane if necessary." The new Cattle Market in the Welford Road was opened in 1872.

The "Horse Fair" is mentioned in the Borough Records for 1508, as the name of the piece of ground, outside the southern wall of the town, where horses were bought and sold. These dealings seem to have taken place chiefly at the Midsummer Fair. Thus the Chamberlains' Accounts for the year 1559-60 acknowledge toll received "of the horse fair at Midsummer, 1s. 8d." In the last century a Horse-fair was held four times a year in Humberstonegate. Two of these fairs lasted a whole day each; the others came to an end at mid-day.

A Wool Market was established by the Second Charter of Queen Elizabeth, granted in 1599, in the following words.

"For the relief of the poor and of sick men and women dwelling in Leicester We grant that the Mayor bailiffs and burgesses may have a wool market for the purchase and sale of wool, woollen thread, and yarn, provided such market damage no neighbouring market, and any subject may buy wool, woollen thread, and yarn brought into Leicester on the days appointed,

when fairs and markets are held, and may sell the same again or use it in any way, the statute of Edward VI or any other statute notwithstanding. Further We will that all tolls, stallages pickages, fines, amercements, profits, &c., arising out of the said market shall be used for the profit of the poor and sick men and women within the borough." The Wool Market was held every Wednesday and Saturday.

A Wool Hall was made out of the disused Hospital of St. John, and it was ordered by the Corporation " that every stone or tod of wool, either fleece wool or pelt wool, which shall be at any time hereafter brought to the Borough to be sold, shall be weighed at the Wool Hall in the same Borough upon pain of 3s. 4d. for every stone and of 6s. 8d. for every tod." This order was made in the October of 1599, but was not universally obeyed for in the following August it was resolved " that the Act and Order lately made for the selling and weighing of wool at the Wool-Hall shall be put in execution, and such townsmen as have since the making of the said law sold and weighed their wool at home at their houses, or in any other place within the Borough of Leicester out of the Wool Hall, shall pay the fines forfeited." The Wool Hall did not, however, fulfil the hopes of its promoters, and the grant of the market was afterwards called in question.

On the western side of the Saturday Market used to stand a large elm-tree, which, in the 16th century, had the ground beneath its spreading branches paved, and furnished with seats. A new elm was planted in the year 1689. This was, presumably, the " Pigeon Tree," under which, according to Gardiner, " country women sat to sell pigeons." A pair of stocks stood in the shade of the marketplace elm, and another pair is said to have been under the Pillory near to the Cornwall.

A very good idea of the general appearance of the Leicester Saturday Market Place, as it was before the modern industrial expansion of the town, may be gathered from the three old views reproduced in the first volume of Messrs. J. and T. Spencer's Leicestershire Notes and Queries.

Mediæval Wall South of St Mary's

IX.

THE OCCUPATIONS.

DURING the Middle Ages the trade of Leicester was almost entirely regulated by the Guild Merchant, or Chapman's Guild. As soon as a man had entered that Guild, he was free to carry on his special business, without paying the tolls which a non-guildsman would have to pay, and he shared all the privileges of the great trading fraternity of the town. So real was the brotherhood of the Guild, that, if any member happened to be present when a bargain was made by another member, he was entitled to have a share in it. Only Guildsmen were allowed to carry on any retail trade within the town—a rule which is proved by the exception of a few strangers being specially licensed to sell in the market, who were known as "homines stallati," or stall-men, and eyed with suspicion. And when a man entered the Guild, he was bound to conform to all the regulations that were laid down by the twenty-four Jurats of the Guild.

It would seem as if some of the Leicester traders resented these regulations, and aspired to self-management as early as the 13th century. The fullers, for instance, held meetings on their own account before the year 1260, and even, it would seem, appointed their own overseers, and fixed their own prices. It was resolved, however, by the Chapman's Guild, "with the consent of the merchants and the weavers and fullers," that, after that year, the fullers should not hold any "morning-speech," except in the presence of two merchants of the Guild of Merchants, who should have been chosen for that purpose from the community of the Guild; and also that they should conform to certain customs and rules then settled by the Guild. The weavers at the same time also consented to the regulations of their trade then laid down. But, five years afterwards, when a resolution had been passed by the Guild fixing their wages, and ordering them not to weave any cloth of country villages as long as they had enough work from the men of Leicester, they again took matters into their own hands, and made "a certain provision about weaving against the community of the Guild of Merchants."

The fullers too had to be fined soon afterwards for holding an independent meeting. In the next century the Mayor and Community appointed two Wardens to look after defaulting fullers and " to present their short-comings when they find any." And when the weavers again became troublesome, two men were chosen " by all the town of Leicester " to rule their craft. Both in England and on the Continent, Weavers were the earliest craftsmen to form Guilds, and their unions had been recognised in many other towns long before this is known to have been the case at Leicester. At London and Oxford they received charters as early as the reign of Henry I, and the Weavers' Guild at Nottingham was acknowledged by Henry II. But Doering suggests (Studien zur Verfassungsgeschichte von Leicester, Hanau, 1908, p. 68.) that the Leicester Guild did not admit working Weavers, because there was an outside Weavers' Company as early as the first Guild-rolls, where only one Weaver is mentioned (a guildsman's *father*.)

In the 14th century an attempt was made by the Leicester Water-men to organize themselves into a Company, but the Guild Merchant suppressed it immediately by ordering proclamation to be made that " henceforth the lochel-men, called water-men, shall be separated, and shall serve the commune well and loyally according to the custom before used, and if any association be found among them, and they shall be attainted of this, that the Chamberlains cause 3s. 4d. to be levied from each of them at the first default, to the use and profit of the community, and at the second default, 6s. 8d., and so on increasing 3s. 4d. at each default, until they will submit to this ordinance."

In spite of these occasional differences between particular classes of tradesmen and the general body of merchants, a number of Leicester trades became organized into distinct unions, which were commonly known, in the 15th and 16th centuries, as " Occupations." They were not independent of the Guild Merchant ; in fact all their regulations were subject to the approval of the Mayor and his brethren. Thus, in the year 1521, it was ordained by the Guild that " Mr. Mayor and his brethren 4 or 5 or 8 shall accept and prove all Ordinals of all the Occupations, within this

town, and those customs that be good to allow them, and those that be evil to damn them." Some years later the duty of considering and approving, or condemning, fresh additions to any Ordinal was given to a Common Hall " or at least to the Mayor and two Justices of the Peace." It was afterwards required by Statute that every Ordinal should be confirmed by the Judges of Assize.

According to Thompson, the companies which were in existence and recognized as semi-independent organizations in the early part of the 16th century, were the Tailors, the Smiths, the Shoemakers, the Bakers and the Butchers. The Tailors' Occupation was undoubtedly one of the earliest. Thompson gives the date of its establishment as 1450 ; and it was certainly existing in the time of the mayoralty of John Fresley (1466), when it was agreed " by the Wardens and all the Occupation of the craft of Tailors that there shall no tailor set up his craft as a master within the town of Leicester but the Wardens of the said craft shall bring in 10s. in money and pay it to the Chamberlains for his duty to the Chapman's Guild, a fortnight before the Chamberlains enter into their account, upon pain of forfeiting 20s. of the guild of Tailors' money to be levied by the Chamberlains."

The Occupations that are referred to in the published Records of the Borough number seventeen, and a list of them is subjoined, together with the dates at which they were first mentioned. The date, as a rule, shows only that the Occupation was then existing ; it may have been established, in some cases, long before. And it must be borne in mind that the town records are entirely missing from 1380 to 1465.

Occupation.	Date of first mention.	Reference in the Borough Records.
1. Tailors. ..	1466.	Vol. II. 363.
2. Bakers ..	1488.	Vol. II. 318.
3. Shoemakers ..	1531.	Vol. III. 31.
4. Butchers ..	1540.	Vol. III. 45.
5. Smiths ..	1540.	Vol. III. 44.
6. Barbers ..	1553.	Vol. III. 78.
7. Glovers ..	1553.	Vol. III. 78.
8. Coopers ..	1553.	Vol. III. 78.
9. Fullers, or Walkers	1557.	Vol. III. 91.
10. Chandlers ..	1558.	Vol. III. 89.

Occupation.	Date of first mention.	Reference in the Borough Records.
11. Drapers	.. 1560.	Vol. III. 99.
12. Shearmen	.. 1560.	Vol. III. 99.
13. Tanners	.. 1566.	Vol. III. 119.
14. Weavers	.. 1573.	Vol. III. 152.
15. Ironmongers	.. 1573.	Vol. III. 152.
16. Cutlers	.. 1573.	Vol. III. 152.
17. Brewers	.. 1574.	Vol. III. 154.

The Glovers were not granted an Ordinal in proper form until 1600, but they had an Ordinal in use as early as 1559.

The Brewers' Occupation was established in 1574, when it was agreed at a common hall that " the Brewers shall together become a fellowship or brotherhood and to have certain orders and decrees made amongst them by the consent of the Mayor before the 25th day of March 1575, and then amongst them to appoint Wardens and such other officers as shall be needful, and the same to be ratified and allowed from time to time by the Mayors there." The Master and 2 Wardens were appointed by the Mayor.

Half of the fines which were incurred for breaches of the rules contained in a trade's Ordinal were paid over to the Chamberlains for the Guild Merchant. Entrance fees were also paid to them by the Steward of an Occupation, when members set up their craft. Moreover, the keeping of apprentices was regulated by the governing body of the town. No one, in the 16th century, might keep an apprentice unbound above forty days, and every apprentice had to be enrolled before the Mayor. All persons entering a craft were required to swear the same Oath, which ran thus :—

" I shall truly do and execute all good rules and customs contained and specified within mine Ordinal. I shall be obedient to my Wardens' commandment at all times convenient. I shall truly and duly pay all such duties and forfeits as shall be due within the said Ordinal and all other good rules and customs belonging to the said Ordinal to my knowledge and power I shall maintain and keep. So God me help and all His Saints."

The Occupations appear to have been managed, as a rule, by two Wardens and a Steward. The Oath taken by these officials is thus given by Nichols in its 17th century form :—

" You shall swear truly to observe and keep and of your and every of your parts cause to be observed and kept all the good and lawful rules, ordinances and constitutions contained and specified within this your Ordinal, so far forth as in you is, and by the law of the realm you ought. You shall truly without partiality collect and gather up or cause to be collected and gathered up all and every such fines, pains, penalties, forfeitures and sums of money whatsoever that shall be forfeited, payable or due by any of you, or any of your Occupation, or by any other person or persons whatsoever by reason or force of this your Ordinal; and therefore shall at the end of your year make and yield up in writing a just and true account to all the rest of your said Occupation, or to the most part of them, that shall to that purpose assemble together: and shall also truly without fraud or delay yearly and at the end of your year, or at the furthest within one month before the Chamberlains of the said Borough of Leicester shall make their accounts, pay or cause to be paid to the said Chamberlains of the town, and to the use of the town, the just moiety or one half of all the said fines, pains, penalties, forfeitures and sums of money as shall come to your hands by force of the said Office. These and all other things belonging to your said office and offices you and every of you shall well and truly perform to the best of your power and skill. So help you God."

In the first roll of the Guild Merchant, which dates from 1196, the men who are described as entering the guild were members of more than 50 different callings, a list of which is subjoined.

Trade.	Description.	Numbers.
1. Baker ..	Pistor, furnur ..	15.
2. Mercer ..	..	9.
3. Smith ..	Faber ..	9.
4. Merchant ..	Mercator, marcant	6.
5. Dyer ..	Tinctor, brasiler ..	6.
6. Cook ..	Keu, coc. ..	6.
7. Parchment-maker	Parcheminer ..	5.
8. Waterman ..	Aquarius, ouarius	5.
9. Forage-merchant	Avenator, avener, plantefene	5.
10. Goldsmith ..	Aurifaber ..	4.
11. Leatherworker ..	Parmentor ..	3.
12. Cooper ..	Cuuer ..	3.
13. Miller ..	Molendarius, muner	3.
14. Wheelwright ..	Rotarius ..	3.
15. Saddler ..	Seler, paneler ..	3.

	Trade.	Description.	Numbers.
16.	FARRIER ..	Ferator, ferur ..	2.
17.	CARPENTER ..	..	2.
18.	TANNER ..	Tannator ..	2.
19.	FISHER ..	Piscator ..	2.
20.	BUTCHER ..	Carnifex ..	2.
21.	HOSIER ..	Hoser ..	2.
22.	SHOEMAKER ..	Corvisor, sutor ..	2.
23.	TAVERNKEEPER ..	Belhoste ..	1.
24.	TAILOR ..	..	1.
25.	TURNER ..	..	1.
26.	PORTER ..	..	1.
27.	LEECH ..	Medicus ..	1.
28.	CORDER ..	..	1.
29.	GRASSMONGER ..	Gressemonger ..	1.
30.	GIRDLEMAKER ..	Seinter ..	1.
31.	POTTER ..	..	1.
32.	OSTLER ..	Stabler ..	1.
33.	GRANGER ..	..	1.
34.	WOOLPACKER ..	Packere ..	1.
35.	WOOLCOMBER ..	Combere ..	1.
36.	CLOTH-BINDER ..	Liur de dras ..	1.
37.	CLOTH-DRIVER* ..	Pannebetere ..	1.
38.	CLOTHDUBBER ..	Dubbere ..	1.
39.	CONFECTIONER ..	Flauner ..	1.
40.	PALMER ..	..	1.
41.	MASON ..	Macun ..	1.
42.	PAINTER ..	Pinctor ..	1.
43.	PLUMBER ..	Plummer ..	1.
44.	HOSPITAL ATTENDANT	Spitelman ..	1.
45.	SERJEANT ..	Serviens ..	1.
46.	CHANCELLOR ..	Cancellarius† ..	1.
47.	PREACHER ..	..	1.
48.	CLERK ..	Clericus ..	1.
49.	MALTMONGER ..	..	1.
50.	MUSTARDER ..	..	1.
51.	GROOM, or SQUIRE ..	Daunsel ..	1.
52.	..	Hallknave ..	1.
53.	..	Vilein ..	1.

It will be noticed that the Bakers' trade was more fully represented than any other. No other trade, indeed, was quite so essential to the community; none was so jealously watched nor so stringently governed; and therefore, in order to learn how the Guild Merchant dealt with mediaeval trade, and how the Leicester Occupations were regulated, it may be well to gather some information about this ancient and life-giving fraternity.

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*Miss Bateson has panbeater, or Tinker, but a derivation from *pannus*, cloth, seems more probable.

†Doering suggests that some names, of which this is one, may be nicknames. This man, however, appears elsewhere as "*del canc*'" *i.e.* "of the Chancery."

For several centuries after the Conquest, the inhabitants of Leicester, who were compelled to grind their corn at the Earl's mills, were obliged also to bake their bread at his ovens. These were situated mainly in that quarter of the town which lay nearest to the Castle. Hot Gate, the " vicus calidus " of the 14th century, is said to have received its name from the genial warmth of the glowing furnaces, and their memory is also preserved in the name of Bakehouse Lane. A Bakers' Row (" rengia Pistorum ") is mentioned in the Mayor's Accounts for 1306.

The value attached to bakehouse rights, and the compulsory character of the suit or service by which tenants were bound to bake at their lords' ovens, are illustrated by a document, executed about the year 1200, in which Petronilla, the widow of Robert Blanchmains, and mother of Robert FitzParnel, Earls of Leicester, confirmed a grant of certain land and houses outside the South Gate of Leicester to a namesake of hers, Petronilla, the daughter of Richard, Roger's son, of Leicester. The property included a bakehouse, or oven, (furnus), and the Countess of Leicester gave to Petronilla Rogerson and her children and heirs all the suit of the men outside the South Gate to bake at the bakehouse, with all the liberties and free customs; saving the customary tenants of the Countess who were bound to the bakehouses of the Countess within the town of Leicester, and saving the liberty of the Countess' burgesses outside the said Gate. If Petronilla Rogerson should desire to remove the bakehouse elsewhere upon her lands the Countess granted that they might have suit wherever the bakehouse might be placed on her lands. At the same time a deed in similar terms was made by the Countess' son, Robert FitzParnel, the Earl; and, two or three years later, a like confirmation of the grant was executed by Saher de Quincey, Earl of Winchester, the husband of the Countess' daughter Margaret.

It is not clear whether a burgess could then make an oven of his own, though the reservation of the burgesses' rights in the Countess' grant suggests that this may have been so. No burgess would be allowed to do so, we may be sure, without

paying a " furnage " toll to the lord.* Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, who was beheaded in 1322, was the owner of six common ovens at Leicester, which were rented at £10 a year; and John of Gaunt, in his Charter of 1375, thought best to reserve to himself all his bakehouse rights. But the common ovens were sometimes let out at rents which do not seem to have been extortionate. Thus, in the year 1422, a Leicester baker, named Thomas Harding, took from the Duchy of Lancaster a thirty years lease of the common oven outside the North Gate of Leicester at a yearly rental of 20s., the lord undertaking to maintain it in good repair—a very favourable bargain, one would think, for the tenant.

A case which arose at the end of the sixteenth century touching the furnage rights of the Crown, as representing the House of Lancaster, will be referred to later. In the middle of the 14th century, the Earl complained that some burgesses, " who had nothing by which they could be distrained, except their flour in the mill or their bread," claimed that they ought not to be distrained at the mill or the oven, and therefore " caused their flour to be carried away at night from the mill to the oven." It was agreed, however, in 1352, that distress might be levied " as well within houses as without, as well at the mill and at the oven as elsewhere."

Besides the restrictions upon promiscuous baking which were imposed by the lord's monopoly of ovens, the Bakers of Leicester were subject to strict regulations regarding the price and quality of their bread. The Statute for regulating the price of bread throughout the Kingdom by a public assize was passed in 1266, and the Leicester Guild Merchant saw to it that the town bakers obeyed this law. The assize is not mentioned in the published Records until the year 1335, when it was ordained " that the Assize of Bread be kept, that is to say that all bakers shall bake four loaves for a penny of whatever kind of bread, well cooked and well baked, so long as the quarter of wheat is within the price of 4s."

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* In the reign of Henry VII burgesses were ceasing to use the Crown ovens and erecting their own. (Records of the Borough of Leicester Vol. II. Introduction xxi., *note.*)

Bakers were fined for selling defective bread, for short weight, and for divers other offences against the assize of bread. They claimed, as a custom, that on the first default they should be fined 1s. 4d., at the second default 2s. 8d., at the third default 5s. 4d., at the fourth that they should be put in the pillory, or pay 40s. These fines were at first collected by the Earl's Stewards for his benefit. Thus, in 1462 a valuation of the lord's perquisites gave the value of the fines against assize of bread at £4 2s. 9d. a year. The fines were sometimes remitted to impecunious or importunate bakers. It was ordained, therefore, in 1352, by agreement between the Counsel of the Lord and the Mayor and good people of the town, that, since the bakers claimed such a custom, and no increase could be charged on bakers who were rich, no remission should be allowed to those who were less rich. The Leicester bakers were indeed dealt with leniently, for in other towns punishments more stringent than fines were enforced. Thus in London fraudulent bakers had to stand in the pillory with lumps of dough round their necks. This is almost as amusing an example of the mediaeval custom of fitting the punishment to the crime as the case of John Penrose, who was accused of selling unwholesome wine to the common people in 1364. Judgment was that he should drink a draught of the same wine which he sold to the common people, and the remainder of the wine should then be poured on his head.

In the year 1352 the assize of bread was taken in October, and the price of wheat was then very high, as a result of the Black Death, and the agricultural depression which immediately followed it. The quarter of best wheat was worth 8s. 6d., of medium 8s., and of the worst 7s. 6d. In the following year the price fell again to 4s., and during the next hundred years it averaged about that price, rising once, in 1362, to 8s. 6d., and in 1364 to as much as 12s.

The weight of the loaf, it should be noted, was measured by the weight of certain coins. "The pound sterling," as it has been said, "was not a coin in mediaeval England, but a weight of metal, coined or otherwise; it is therefore common to find

fractions of a pound weight expressed in shillings and pence." Thus, an Act of 51 Henry III (1266-7), enacted that " when a quarter of wheat is sold for xii d., then wastel bread of a farthing shall weigh vi pounds and xvi shillings." The weight of the farthing white loaf (at the same price of wheat) was to be vi pounds and xviii shillings ; that of the halfpenny white loaf 13 pounds and 16 shillings ; that of the halfpenny wheat loaf xx pounds and xiv shillings ; and that of the horse-loaf xxvii pounds and xii shillings. So the price of the loaf did not vary, but it purchased a varying weight.

When the price of the quarter of wheat was 4s. a loaf would have to weigh as much as 36 shillings : when the price rose to 6s., the loaf should weigh 22s. 8d. ; and when the price was 11s. the loaf was to weigh only 12s. 4½d. In 1357 the Guild Merchant ordered that bakers should bake four wastells for a penny, and two wastells for a halfpenny, and also of cocket bread, and similarly of all kinds of bread, under pain of a heavy fine. A century later, in 1467, it was again enacted that all bakers should bake " symnell, wastell, coket lovys, iiii for a peny of good paste good bulture," (*i.e.* well-boulted meal) " and well baken and of rynged and of temsed " (sifted) " breed iiii lovys for a peny and of all other kyndes of breed sesonable and of good weyght and pryse after the forme aforsaid and iiii lovys for a peny of hors breed made of clene peyse and benys in his kynde suyng the pryse and weyght."

Wastell, it may be explained, was the best bread. (Old French, *wastel*, *gastel*, modern, *gâteau*). Cocket bread was slightly inferior. Simnell, (Old French, *simenel*), was cake of fine wheaten flour. Horsebread was the common artificial food of horses in the Middle Ages. " The modern dog-biscuit is its nearest equivalent." In 1521 it was ordered that bakers selling horsebread within the houses at Leicester to every guest should sell but two loaves for a penny. In the time of Queen Elizabeth the assize was three loaves a penny, and thirteen penny-worth, (a baker's dozen), for 12 pence, everyone of the three loaves to weigh the full weight of a penny white loaf.

Apart from the quality and price of bread, the mediaeval legislators were concerned (1) to insure supplies, (2) to insure good weight, and (3) to protect the Occupation from outside competition.

(1) Bread might not be sold which had been kept more than a week, and regrators and regratresses who broke this rule, and did not give the loaves back to the bakers, had to pay for all damage incurred by their keeping them. "And let them be right well amerced," said John of Norton, who was Mayor of Leicester in 1323, "if they be attainted of this after our prohibition." On the other hand, it was ordered in 1357 that, if it chanced that bread were wanting in the town through the bakers' fault, and if they had their flour in their houses and would not bake it, and this was discovered, that flour was forfeit.

Women who sold bread were ordered to put it in their windows, and not to hide it "in hutches or corners," and not to sell bread with butter or cheese or eggs, but each separately. In 1467 a drastic measure was passed "that the town lack no manner of bread, white nor brown, nor no other kinds of bread, in pain of imprisonment as long as the Mayor likes when the town is breadless." That such measures as this were not uncalled for is shown by a strike of bakers which occurred, a few years after this date, in 1484, at Coventry. The bakers then went to Bakynton, leaving the City destitute of bread, wherethrough "strangers resorting to the city and the inhabitants of the same were unvictualled." They were fined £20, of which £10 was given to them again.

(2) In order to insure good weight, no baker might take bread into the country without first bringing it on horseback to the mayor, or to the Wardens of the Bakers' Occupation to be weighed, "and see whether it be able bread and wholesome for man's body." And, on the other hand, no bread was to be received from the country till seen and weighed before Mr. Mayor or by his officers and by the Wardens of Bakers. Bread in the custody of the bailiffs had to be weighed within the same day or the next "so that it might not dry up too much while in their keeping."

(3) In order to protect the town bakers' Occupation, it was resolved by the Guild Merchant in 1520 that no country baker should bring in bread except on market days, Wednesday and Friday, " and to set down at the High Cross and sell by the 1d. worth or 2d. worth." No foreign bakers were allowed to take bread to customers " on pain of forfeiting their bread to the King, and their bodies to be imprisoned at Mr. Mayor's commandment " ; but on Saturdays they might bring it to the Saturday Market, and sell it there. The country bakers were required to take the following oath :—" You shall swear you shall well and truly observe and keep all and everything contained in the three branches in the Bakers' Ordinal and which concerns the Bakers of the country and do and perform all other matters and things as in any sort concern the good orders and rules of the said trade so far forth as concerns you to the best of your knowledge, skill and ability. So help you God."

Bread forfeited under the assize was usually given away to poor people by the Mayor. In the year 1482 it was ordained that the Mayor's brethren should not bake to sell, within their houses or without, on pain of losing their office ; but soon afterwards a more excellent way was found. This order was abolished, and a new provision was made, that, if the Mayor or any of his brethren were bakers, and offended against the assize, they should pay double the usual penalty.

Towards the end of the 16th century, a claim made by some Leicester bakers to bake at their own houses bread and cakes, which were not for their own consumption, was resented by the general body of the baking fraternity who used the Crown bakeries. An action was brought in the Court of the Duchy of Lancaster to test the validity of this claim. The case was that one William Becket, who was a common victualler of Leicester, used to bake at the Queen's common bakehouses, but he had also an oven in his own house, at which he was accustomed, " as divers others in that town have done," to bake " pies, pastries, and sometimes spiced bread and cakes." The defendant acknowledged his suit to the Queen's ovens, and the Court of the Duchy ordered that from thenceforth he should bake his

bread at the Queen's ovens, and should forbear to bake any spiced bread or cakes, except that he might bake at his own oven such only and so much as the Mayor and Aldermen might give him license to do according to the direction of the Privy Council. Mr. and Mrs. Becket continued their private baking as before, apparently without any such license, and thereby roused the active resentment of the other bakers of the town. Their opposition became so violent, that in April, 1599, two months after the order of court, William Becket went over to Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and laid his case before the powerful Earl of Huntingdon. The Earl took Becket's part, and sent him back to the Mayor of Leicester with the following letter. "Mr. Mayor: I understand by the bearer hereof, William Becket, that he hath been licensed to victual in your town of Leicester, and, for that his wife hath uttered, for the better maintenance of herself and her great charge, some spiced cakes or bread, whereat the bakers have seemed to take exceptions, and thereupon so molested them as thereby they be greatly impoverished; my desire is for the relief of him and his charge, that since it lieth in you to grant him a license to sell and utter such cakes, that you should so permit him to do without any further molestation by them offered: for as I do hear by information that there is an order set down in the Duchy Court that you may make and confirm him a license so to do, and thereby free the poor man from any trouble hereafter by any of them procured, which I would wish you to do for the better relief of him and his great charge. And so I bid you farewell. Ashby the viii April, 1599.

Your friend,

George Huntingdon."

The Mayor does not seem to have acceded to the Earl's request. At any rate, in October of the same year, two Judges of the Court of Exchequer and the Attorney of the Council of the Duchy issued an Order, requiring the Mayor and Aldermen "to take such order with the bakers that you and they permit the said Becket to bake such small things as he hath used in your town in his own house, as divers others in that town have done, which in our opinions may be done in some measure, considering how

the price of corn is fallen, without prejudice either to your corporation or the said bakers of the said town. Of your accomplishment whereof in some moderate sort we do not doubt." After the receipt of this Order, the Mayor and Corporation summoned Becket and the Bakers before them. Becket then said that, unless he might be suffered to bake such sorts of bread and as much weekly as he had heretofore used, he would " answer them (the Plaintiffs) to the law." The Mayor and his brethren then reported to the Attorney, that, in view of Becket's attitude, they had " taken no order betwixt them," but had " left them to the order of the honourable court of the Duchy." One of the Plaintiff Bakers, Roger Hall, having made an affidavit to the effect that the Defendants had disobeyed the injunction which prohibited them from baking in their houses " spiced cakes, buns, biscuits and such other spiced bread, and to sell the same, (being bread out of assize and not by law allowed)," the Duchy Court made an Order on Jan. 25, 1600, and appointed the ensuing 21st of April for hearing the matter. The case seems, however, to have been settled before that date, on April 3rd, when the bakers agreed that Becket should be allowed to bake spiced bread, &c. one day in the week, upon his undertaking not to bake more than would serve his guests.

The Ordinal of the Leicester Bakers' Occupation has not been preserved, but no doubt it corresponded generally to those of other towns. Its contents may be inferred, in some degree, from the Composition of the Hull Bakers, dated 1598, which is still extant. This ordinance provided in the first place for the government of the company. One Warden and two Searchers were to be chosen yearly, who, on the day after their election, should be sworn before the Mayor, and who should give bonds to the company ; and only freemen were to be admitted to the company. Provision was made for the protection of the trade : no innholder or other person within the town not free of the company of bakers might bake any bread for sale, nor for serving their guests ; no inhabitant might bake cakes to sell, and no person from outside the town might sell bread within the town except on Market Days, and then only by retail. Offenders were to be

fined ; and the Warden and Searchers might distrain for such fines, calling in, if necessary, the Mayor's officers. The Bakers undertook to serve the town well with all kinds of bread, and to keep the assize, to pay half the fines to the Mayor and Burgesses and ten shillings yearly for the composition, and not to take apprentices without the consent of the Mayor and the greater part of his brethren. The Warden and Searchers were to come weekly to the Mayor to take their assize to sell by ; and the company were to deliver bread to poor women and other of the town to retail the same again, thirteen loaves to the dozen. The Hull Composition was executed by the bakers, and also by the Mayor and Burgesses under their common seal.

It is greatly to be regretted that the account books of the mediaeval Occupations of Leicester have not come down to us. Their testimony to the past life of the town would have been of the highest value. The trading guilds of the Middle Ages, were, as we know, " no mere formal organizations for purposes which ended with the hard toil of the working day." It is highly probable that they developed out of religious guilds. At any rate they were undoubtedly inspired by the same ardent feeling of Christian brotherhood. " The warm blood of the life of the time circulated in them. Their members sat together at the feast, stood by each other's honour in the mart, lived in the same quarter, shared the same purchase, marched side by side in the pageant, acted together in the play, and fought together in the part of the city walls committed to their care. The esprit de corps was as strong among them as among knights of higher rank. Honesty and fair dealing were dear to them, and they followed the bier of the departed, and paid wax for the rest of his soul in peace." Now and then echoes of this ancient life sound faintly in the surviving records of mediaeval Leicester. There is, for instance, the report of a Common Hall which was held on the 26th day of March, 1477, at which the Players who played the Passion Play in the preceding year brought in a bill for certain debts incurred, and asked the Guild Merchant " whether the Passion should be put to the crafts to be bound or nay " ; and, at the same time the Players gave to the Pageants all the proceeds

of the play up to that time, and all their raiments and all other manner of stuff that they had. The Guild Merchant thereupon chose 21 persons to have the direction of the play. Mr. Kelly thought that this record indicated that at Leicester, as in many other ancient boroughs, such as York and Chester, the Passion Play was acted by players selected from the different crafts or trading guilds. They do not seem however to have had the management of the Play, for this proposal that the crafts should manage it was not accepted, the governing body of the town deciding that it should be managed by a committee of their own, "with two beadles." Whether the crafts of Leicester arranged the Passion Plays or not, they used undoubtedly to get up and present outdoor Pageants on days of High Festival. Nor did the fraternities of trade lag behind the religious guilds in public spirit and generosity. Thus, in the year 1540, the Occupations of Smiths and Butchers and Bakers and Corvisors, or Shoemakers, all subscribed according to their means towards the expense of obtaining Henry VIII's charter of Fairs.

The deep sense of brotherhood which animated the old Leicester Occupations is well brought out by the record which tells how, in the year 1531, the Warden and Company of Journeymen Shoemakers agreed to pay to the Dominicans or Black Friars ten marks over and above the usual offering duties, to have their prayers; and how, in the following year, it was agreed, before Mr. Nicholas Reynold, then Mayor, by consent of the Wardens and all the Company of Journeymen Shoemakers, that they should give yearly to the Austin Friars in Leicester, for all the brethren and sisters to be prayed for, in ready money 10s., to be paid at two times in the year, besides the offering days before used. Women were not admitted to the Guild Merchant of Leicester, but it appears from this record that the Shoemakers' Occupation admitted both brothers and sisters.

Again, the Occupations acted as Insurance and Friendly Societies for their members, and helped them when they were in distress. Thus, the Articles of the Leicester Glovers' and Fellmongers' Ordinance, which have been preserved, contain the following clause:—

" That if any of the masters' apprentices or dwelling in the said borough fall into poverty or decay by God's visitation, by fire or by sickness, to have relief of such moneys and forfeitures as shall arise to the said occupations at the discretion of the said masters and greater part of the said company."

And the fraternal spirit which inspired the trade crafts of mediaeval Leicester is delightfully indicated by another provision contained in the same Articles :—

" That, at the death and marriage of the said masters' wives, children and servants, upon notice of the beadle, all the said masters, not having reasonable excuse (to be allowed at the next meeting), shall be present, contagious times excepted, on pain for each sixpence."

X.

THE POPULATION.

THERE is little doubt that at the date of the Domesday Survey, Leicester was a flourishing town. Historians have been misled by the alleged total destruction of Leicester, which is said to have occurred in the year 1068, and consequently the borough has been represented as being, at the date of the Domesday Survey, in a ruinous and depopulated state. The only record of this supposed destruction is contained in the Register of Leicester Abbey, the M.S. of which is preserved in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. But there is every reason to think that the destruction to which the Abbey scribe referred did not occur in 1068. On the contrary Mr. J. H. Round assigns it, for various good reasons, and " without a shadow of doubt," to the rebellion of Ivo de Grantmesnil in 1101. Moreover, of the 322 houses registered in Domesday book, as then standing within the borough of Leicester, four only are said to have been then " waste," or uninhabited,—a fact which is quite inconsistent with a recent sack. These tenements were those held of the King *in capite*, and there may have been others. However, on the basis of five persons to each of 318 houses, the number of the occupants of those tenements would be about 1600, and they formed the great bulk of the community. The whole of the population would not exceed 2000.

Two thousand inhabitants may seem few for a town of any importance, but it must be remembered that the whole of the population of England did not at that time reach two millions, and no town had more than a few thousand occupants. Mr. F. W. Maitland, multiplying the " recorded men " in Domesday by five, makes the total population of England at that time only 1,375,000. Winchester, one of the largest towns, is estimated to have contained between 6000 and 8000. Colchester had over 2000.

After the Conquest the population of the town increased but slowly. It was held in check by the hard life of those un-

Wall of Grey Friars' Priory
(Brickwork circ. 1500)

settled days, and it suffered also from violent acts of military license, such as the rebellion of 1101, when Ivo de Grantmesnil "first introduced the horrors of private warfare into England." Still more devastating was the awful catastrophe of 1173. All the historians agree in emphasising the spirit of ruin and desolation which then swept over Leicester. "The houses were never afterwards rebuilt; the streets became lanes, and the sites of the buildings were in time converted into orchards." The inhabitants who survived the fire and slaughter of this great sack were allowed to leave the town on paying 300 marks or pounds of silver, and sought refuge at St. Albans, or at St. Edmondsbury. Polydore Vergil says that Leicester would have been razed to the ground, "if the besiegers could have taken the castle." For some years the town was almost deserted, and the inhabitants must have dwindled to a mere handful.

It was not long, however, before members of the old families began to return, and settlers from other towns were also attracted to the place. The earliest rolls of the Guild Merchant, which date from 1196, give some evidence on this point. We find men registered there, as entering the Guild at the end of the 12th century and later, whose names betray their foreign origin, such as "Brete" (the Breton), and "Voncq" (from the Ardennes); or else their names show that they were strangers to Leicester who came from other parts of the island, as in the case of "de Anglia," and "Norreis" (the Northerner). Many have come from villages of Leicestershire and Rutland; others from Warwickshire, and the Forest of Arden; others from towns like Northampton, Peterborough and Lincoln; from Stratford, Wenlock, Winchester, Carlisle and Lichfield.

By the beginning of the thirteenth century the town was evidently recovering from its grievous wound, but the population was probably far smaller than it had been a hundred years earlier.

It was not, indeed, until the thirteenth century had fully dawned, that the Boroughs of England began to obtain such a measure of independence and freedom as rendered possible the gathering of wealth and the growth of population. The full stream of prosperity did not set in for many a year, but even before

1300 some of the worst evils which beset the life of mediaeval towns had given way to better conditions. Leicester never lagged behind other towns in reforming zeal, and its progress was comparatively rapid. In the year 1269 this town appears in the King's subsidy roll amongst the richest boroughs, inferior in its contributions only to London, the Cinque Ports, York, Lincoln, Yarmouth, Worcester and Winchester. Thompson estimated that in 1300 Leicester contained "not more than 5000 or 6000 inhabitants," but this is certainly an exaggeration, for it is not thought that the largest boroughs at that time could muster more than 4000 or 5000 inhabitants. There is little direct evidence on this point, but it may be noted that a tallage roll of the year 1271 contains 468 contributors, a roll of 1276 contains 428 names, and a roll of 1286 contains 387. A tallage roll of 1306 has 344 names. Some persons may be included among the tax-payers, as possessing goods in Leicester, who did not reside there, but they would be few. At any rate we cannot place the total number of taxpaying householders at Leicester in 1300 at much over 400. On the basis of five persons to a house the tax-paying householders and their families would thus amount to about 2000. To these must be added the non-taxpaying householders, with their families, the monks and clerics, retainers, paupers, prisoners and other waifs and strays, as well as the vast establishment maintained at the Castle. The numbers living at the Castle can only be guessed at, but some indication of the princely scale upon which it was conducted at this period may be gathered from the annual expenditure of the Earl's steward, which amounted in the year 1313 to £7358 9s.—equivalent to nearly £90,000 of present money. Fifteen hundred of "the Earl's great horses," which, we are told, were always kept in the stables, must have given employment to a large number of persons. The religious houses, too, were well occupied. We may estimate that these various elements might contribute, perhaps, nearly 1000 souls. The whole population of the town probably approached 3000.*

* Doering's calculation, 3,500, is wrongly based on the number of names found in tallage-rolls for three separate years.

In the course of the next half century, Leicester, like the other trading towns of England, increased in wealth and population. The tallage rolls show an average of more than 450 taxpayers, and that for the year 1342 contains as many as 550 names. Before the visitation of the Black Death in 1348—1349, there must have been more than 3000 persons within the town. The community had become so numerous, and the civic life of Leicester had been so firmly established, when that calamity fell, that its effects were not so disastrous as they were in poorer and less advanced towns. The only contemporary account of the plague which devastated Leicester in 1348—1349 is that of Henry of Knighton, a canon of Leicester Abbey, who thus describes the ravages which it made throughout the county. "The terrible death rolled on into all parts, according to the course of the sun, and at Leicester, in the little parish of St. Leonard, there died more than 380, in the parish of Holy Cross" (St. Martin's) "more than 400, in that of St. Margaret, Leicester, more than 700; and so in every parish great numbers."

It has been said that this epidemic destroyed more than one-third of the population of the town—a calculation based, presumably, on a statement of Thompson's, that "two thousand deaths, at the lowest computation, must have taken place at Leicester, and that, too, in a population probably not exceeding 6000." But there is reason to conclude that at that time the population was really under 3500.

If we relied solely upon the Records of the Borough we should hardly be aware that any such catastrophe had occurred, still less that it had been as serious and far-reaching as the canon of Leicester Abbey asserts. On turning to a tallage roll of the year 1336, one finds there the names of some 460 taxpayers of Leicester, and a tallage roll made eighteen years later in 1354, six years after the first and most severe visitation of the plague, contains very nearly the same number. Moreover, the amount contributed in 1354 is only thirty shillings less than in 1336. The town thus appears, on the surface at any rate, to have been hardly less populous and wealthy after 1348 than it was before. What is the explanation of this? That Henry of Knighton's figures are untrustworthy, may, of course, be taken for granted;

but at the same time it is quite evident from his account that the epidemic at Leicester was most severe, and had serious consequences. There are two factors which may partly explain the town's rapid recovery. In the first place, it has been observed that the mortality was greatest " among the meaner sort of the people," so that it would not fall as heavily upon a community of well-to-do traders as on agriculturalists. And, in the second place, the fame of Leicester's prosperity was at this period sufficiently wide-spread to attract fresh comers to take the place of those who fell in the course of the epidemic.

An analysis of three of the tallage rolls, those for 1318, 1336 and 1354, gives the following results bearing upon this point.

The number of names on the roll of 1318 is about 460 ; in 1336 it is 460, and in 1354 about 455. Of the names given in 1336, no less than 127 occur also in the roll of 1318, identical both as to Christian and sur-name, and, generally speaking, they may be said to betoken the same persons as those who were living at Leicester eighteen years before. Again, 167 persons on the 1336 roll had family names which occur in the 1318 roll, but different Christian names, and they may be taken to be, as a rule, members of the families which were settled in Leicester in 1318. There were thus on the 1336 roll something like 290 persons who, or whose families, had been settled in the town eighteen years before that time. The names in 1336 that were quite new in Leicester were only 166.

Now if we pass over another eighteen years, and turn to the roll of 1354, the result of a comparison of that with the roll of 1336 is as follows : The identical names are only 58, the names identical as to family are 145, and the new names are no fewer than 247. Thus the old settlers were then about 203, and the new settlers considerably outnumbered them ; whereas in 1336 the old settlers were very greatly more numerous than the new comers. Leicester therefore, it is clear, made up its losses in well-to-do taxpayers by drawing to itself settlers from without. It is even possible to learn, to some extent, whence

they came, for of the 247 new comers nearly half bore names which indicate their place of origin.

Sixty-five of these names are derived, as might be expected, from villages in the counties of Leicester and Rutland, and 27 more from villages lying in the neighbouring counties of Nottingham, Lincoln, Northampton, Warwick, Stafford and Derby. A few come from far-away villages in Lancashire and Northumberland, and the remainder from various towns, among which are London, Liverpool, Dublin, Ely, Coventry, Northampton, Nottingham, Stamford, Tiverton, Lynn, Peterborough, Wellington, Leek, Huntingdon, Stafford, Dunstable, Chester, Grantham, and the French town of Lille.

Nevertheless, although the check given to Leicester's prosperity by the Black Death was not lasting, there must have been a large falling off in the number of inhabitants.

In the year 1377 an ungraduated poll-tax of one groat a head was levied upon all English subjects, except beggars, over fourteen years of age. The number of persons contributing to this tax in the borough of Leicester was returned as 2,101. If one-third is added for the estimated number of persons under 14, the population would, on this evidence, be 2,800. Some may have evaded this unpopular impost, which was soon openly resisted, and the results of the poll tax are no longer considered wholly trustworthy guides to population. Yet it may perhaps be gathered from this return that the population of Leicester was smaller than it had been thirty years before. Sixteen English towns contributed more to the tax than Leicester did. And in 1398, when "the well-beloved Mayor and the honest men of the town of Leicester freely and voluntarily lent one hundred marks" to King Richard the Second, there were eighteen towns which provided the Crown with larger sums. It may be concluded that the population was somewhat lower in 1400 than it had been in 1300.

With the new century the prospects of Leicester became brighter, and for a generation or two the borough increased in wealth and repute, and doubtless in the numbers of energetic citizens who carried on its trade. Unfortunately, almost all the

municipal annals and accounts are lacking after 1380 for the best part of a hundred years. It is evident, however, that before the closing years of the 15th century a change took place, and fortune ceased to smile upon the town's progress. In 1492 the householders on whom the King's tenth was levied did not amount to 250, and there can be little doubt that the population was then dwindling. The town fell, indeed, owing to various causes, into a state of poverty and decay, which lasted nearly a hundred years. Many other English boroughs were then in the same plight, but the Leicester people themselves said that all their troubles were due to the introduction of strangers, who were allowed to trade in the borough to the detriment of the old burghers who paid the taxes. Their opinions on the subject may be gathered from a verbose petition which they addressed to the Earl of Southampton, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, in the year 1540. They complained that "where before this time it hath been used and accustomed within the said town that no foreigners dwelling out of the said town should sell by retail any manner of wares or merchandise but only victuallers for victuals within the said town of Leicester except in the time of the fairs there and then to sell by retail all things: by which good custom the said town was by long time well maintained in wealth unto now, of late within the space of 40 years last past or thereabouts, that foreigners dwelling out of the said town have been suffered to sell wares and merchandise within the said town by retail; and by reason that foreigners have such liberty many persons have withdrawn themselves from inhabiting within the said town and daily do more and more since they have been suffered to sell by retail within the said town of Leicester as the inhabitants thereof do, so that the greater part of the High Street of the said town within the said 40 years is gone to ruin and decay, and other places of the said town likewise not only decayed but utterly desolate and now fallen in great poverty to the loss of our sovereign lord the King and the decay of the said town and more is like to do unless your lordship's favour and honourable goodness herein unto them be shewed."

In 1564 the number of families in the town of Leicester, as officially returned to the Archdeacon, was only 338; and in 1580 the number of able persons mustered "of the body of the town of Leicester," were but 600 and odd. In 1587 235 houses that had belonged to dissolved colleges, &c., and 406 "bays," or parts of houses under one gable, were "in decay."* In one of the many petitions which were drafted for presentation to the Queen about this time, the Corporation appealed to her "for the better relief of 4,000 of your loving subjects." But it is doubtful if the actual population really reached this figure. Throsby's estimate of 3,000 for the year 1558, and 3,480 for 1600, based upon the statistics of deaths, would seem to be nearer the mark. At any rate, we may safely conclude that, when the 17th century opened, the inhabitants of the town were not more than in 1500, and probably hardly reached 4,000.

Recurring visitations of the plague were met by better sanitary measures for coping with the epidemic; a policy of isolating infected areas and cases did much to prevent the disease spreading; and yet the further progress of Leicester was undoubtedly much retarded by this scourge, which in 1610-11 claimed very many victims. According to the register of All Saints, more than 600 persons died from it in that year at Leicester. Some time later the devastation of civil war, and the calamity of a great siege did far less to impair the population, which by the year 1664 had considerably increased. The Leicester Hearth Tax Returns for Lady Day, 1663, show rather more than 600 occupied houses, which would hardly give a population much exceeding 3,000, but these returns were less complete than those of 1664, which have been transcribed and published by Mr. Henry Hartopp. It appears from the latter that at that time Leicester contained about 889 occupied houses, and, bearing in mind that the tax was not imposed upon the poorest cottages, we may estimate the number of the inhabitants to have been somewhere about 4,000.

* Most of these buildings, no doubt, were some of the 414 houses unroofed or overthrown by the great tempest of 1563 which had not been restored.

But the critical turning point in the long history of Leicester was near at hand. Towards the close of the 17th century the stocking-frame was introduced into the town, and the manufacture of hosiery very soon became established upon a comparatively large scale. It was estimated by Thompson that in 1700 the town of Leicester contained 6,000 inhabitants, and, although this may be an exaggeration, there is little doubt that a rapid increase had already set in. In the course of the next hundred years the population became at least three times as large as it had ever been. The return made to Parliament in 1800 showed that the number of inhabited houses at that period was 3,205, of uninhabited only 15. The Leicester families were 3,668, consisting of 7,921 males and 9,032 females, in all 16,953.

Thus, after remaining through many centuries a little community of from two to four thousand souls, the city of Leicester began to develop from a small country town into a densely-populated centre of modern commerce. Ever since 1800 its rate of increase has been maintained with a healthy regularity, and the following returns of the Census show with what irresistible steadiness its transformation has been effected :

1801 ..	16,953	1861 ..	68,056
1811 ..	23,146	1871 ..	95,084
1821 ..	30,877	1881 ..	122,376
1831 ..	40,517	1891 ..	142,051
1841 ..	50,853	1901 ..	211,579
1851 ..	60,584	1911 ..	227,222

Roger Westonard House
Higbee's Street

XI.

SOME TOWNSPEOPLE.

FOR many years after the Conquest the leading people of the town of Leicester were of Norman blood. This was owing, of course, to the power of the Norman Earls of Leicester, without whose appointment and approval no man could prosper, or obtain any high office, for the Earls naturally preferred men who were of their own race and who spoke their own language. The first Englishman who held the title of Mayor seems to have been William le Engleys, who was appointed in 1278, and in three subsequent years. It is possible, however, though not very likely, that he was a Norman nicknamed " The Englishman." He was not, at any rate, the first Englishman to bear rule among the burgesses, for as early as 1209, as we shall see, a man was at the head of the Guild Merchant, under the title of " Alderman of the Guild," who bore a Saxon name.

A curious Norman appellation was borne by the Curlevaches, a well-to-do family who owned land in the North suburb of Leicester. One of them deserves to be remembered as one of the ruling men who shaped the destinies of Leicester during its early days. Simon Curlevache was born about the year 1175, for he must have been a prominent member of the Guild Merchant, and probably over 25 years of age, when he witnessed the very important charter in which Robert, Earl of Leicester, who died in 1204, granted to the Burgesses of the town the right to pasture beasts in the Cowhay meadow beyond the South Gate. About the same time he witnessed also a deed executed by Petronilla, the Earl's mother, who died a few years after her son. In the first decade of the 13th century he was established as a merchant of considerable importance. Walter of the Churchyard, who afterwards became a member of the Guild Council, entered the Guild as " Simon Curlevache's man." It is clear that in the year 1209 Simon was carrying on an extensive trade. In that year King John granted him a license to export five lasts of leather (720 hides) from England to St. Valery, for

which license he paid the King 100 shillings, 20s. for each last. The management of the Guild Merchant soon passed into his hands. "In the year next after the death of William Pepin, Abbot of Leicester" (which took place in 1224), Simon Curlevache was acting as Alderman in conjunction with John Warin. Shortly afterwards his name appears on the Guild Roll as the one "Alderman of Leicester." During his sole tenure of this office—which corresponded with the later Mayoralty—the election of the Council of the Guild was for the first time placed on record. The names of 24 burgesses are given in the roll, who were chosen by the Guild to come to all summonses of the Alderman "ad consulendam villam et ad eum sequendum in negotiis villæ pro posse suo si sint in villa sub pena de vid." It may also be said that Simon Curlevache is the first recorded Treasurer of the Borough Funds. It appears from the Guild Roll that in or about the year 1225 he had the receipts of the Guild paid over to him, out of which he disbursed the wages of clerks and serjeants, and accounted for expenses incurred on the North Bridge, with a small balance over. No one else seems to have been associated with him in the chief office of the Guild until the 27th day of February, 1234, when William de St. Lo was appointed to act as Alderman with him. In a deed executed about 1240 the attestation clause begins thus :—"Hiis testibus Simone Curleu et Willelmo de Sein Lo tunc aldermannis Leircestriæ." These men were still the two Aldermen of the Guild in 1241-42. For some unknown reason Curlevache had the misfortune to fall under the displeasure of Simon de Montfort, who, in the year 1239, extorted from him a sum of 500 marks (£333 6s. 8d.)—a very large amount in those times. The affair is known only from a letter in which Robert Grosseteste, the Bishop of Lincoln, took the Earl to task for his harsh and impolitic conduct. The punishment, he told him, was too heavy, and quite out of proportion to the offence. Notwithstanding this remonstrance, Simon de Montfort was obdurate. His namesake was wealthy enough to pay the fine, but we hear nothing of him after 1242 ; and, as he cannot then have been far short of 70 years old, he may have died soon after receiving this severe imposition.

The name recurs in the 14th century, when another Simon Curlevache entered the Guild in 1318-19; but he does not seem to have flourished, for his goods and chattels were assessed in 1336 at no more than 5s.

Another prominent Norman family, of which we catch glimpses in 13th century Leicester, was named de Sancto Laudo, St. Lo, or Seynlowe. Willaim de St. Lo was a contemporary of old Simon Curlevache, and, as we have seen, acted jointly with him in the chief office of the Guild Merchant until 1242 or later. About the year 1250 William de St. Lo and Peter Roger's son, "Mayors of Leicester," were the first witnesses to a deed still extant. In 1251 Peter Roger's son appears as the only Mayor. But St. Lo had not died, for he was alive in 1253, in which year his name heads the list of Jurats chosen to enquire into the origin of Gavelpence and Bridge-silver.

Another Norman family which is conspicuous in the early annals of Leicester is that of the Costeyns. Henry Costeyn, its most prominent member, was a contemporary of Simon Curlevache, and, like him, a witness to the Earl's grant of the Cowhay pasture and to other important documents, including the Earl's quit claim of his Cowhay rights in 1239. Henry Costeyn may have been rather older than Curlevache, for we find him acquiring property in the suburbs of Leicester before the 12th century had expired. He was a merchant of some note, dealing on a large scale, as we may conclude from the fact that he found it worth while to make the King a present of three palfreys in order to secure the royal protection and aid for the conveyance of his merchandise. A palfrey was then considered equal to 15 marks or £10. About 1225 he was chosen a member of the Guild's Council under Alderman Curlevache. The house in which he lived was situated in the old High Street, at the corner of what is now Peacock Lane, overlooking on its eastern side the wide-spreading grounds of the Grey Friars' Monastery, which was built in his lifetime. Two of his sons are mentioned, Ralf, who entered the Guild in 1239, and Henry, who entered in 1254. It was probably this son Henry who had some cases

in the Portmanmote Court about 1260, and who, on one occasion, " claimed the Court of the Lord Abbot and had it."

In the year 1271 the two largest tax-payers in Leicester were Robert de Scharneford and Henry de Rodington. Robert of Sharnford acted for some years as Receiver for the Guild Merchant, and when he died, some time before 1276, the town owed him one mark, which they paid to his executor, Roger the Chaplain. The Robert of Sharnford, who was one of the two first Parliamentary Representatives of the Borough in 1295, and afterwards Receiver of Guild moneys, may have been his son. There were several Sharnfords living at Leicester at the end of the 13th century. Three persons of that name, Robert, John and Gervas, were each fined in 1292 for using false yard-measures. Again in 1299 Robert was charged with contravening the rules of the Guild Merchant. He had traded in partnership with the Sisters of St. Leonard's Hospital, who had lent him their money, although they were excluded from the Guild. To this offence he pleaded guilty. Another Sharnford, William, entered the Guild in 1273, and a record of one of his business transactions is interesting, and throws some light on mediæval shopping and on the importance of mediæval dress. In the year 1300, William Sharnford sold a garment for £5 13s. 4d. The fur lining cost £2 more; and there were also some extra payments, which included a gratuity of 13s. 4d. given to the vendor's brother Philip, the same amount bestowed on his clerk Adam, and one shilling to each of their four grooms. The total expense of the purchase was no less than £9 5s. 0d., equal to more than £100 of present money.

Henry of Rodington, who is sometimes described as a Vintner, was also, like the Sharnfords, a dealer in clothes. He once sold three " russets " to the community, to be presented by them to the Earl of Leicester, which cost as much as £9 9s. 0d. He was appointed Mayor of the Borough by the Earl, " per dominum Comitem," as it is expressly stated, on January 23rd, 1258, and held the office longer than any other Mayor—for twelve years in succession. He used to advance considerable sums of money to enable the community to pay

their way. Six years after he had ceased to be Mayor the town repaid him the large amount of £18, partly for old debts and partly for new. He then lent them further sums, and as these were not soon paid back, he invoked the assistance of the Earl. On October 19th, 1278, the community of the town were summoned by the Earl and his Steward to meet together in their new Guild Hall near St. Nicholas' Church, to consider Henry of Rodington's demands. He declared that he had lent the town numerous sums of money, the particulars of which were then read out, but the scribe adds that there was no proof of any one of them. The claim was finally settled at £15 of silver, "whereof the community made a tally for him, and if it happen that the said Henry brings forward any tally or writing or seeks by word of mouth henceforth to claim or prove any other debt touching the community, they shall in no wise be credited but shall be held for naught." Shortly afterwards Henry of Rodington came into the Guild Hall and brought his tally, bearing at the bottom £15, "and then and there he received from the community the said £15, and he broke the tally, per quod communitas quieta est versus dictum Henricum." When this pertinaceous old money-lover became Reeve of Leicester, after his Mayoralty, he went so far as to take gifts from many to conceal their felonies, as appears in verdicts. But he could always put his enemies to silence. When Roger Aldith—a notoriously quarrelsome fellow—attacked him in the early days of his Mayoralty he was at once forced to make satisfaction; and later, when one William Irving "scolded the Mayor in full Morning-speech, with base and gross words to the shame and despite of the Mayor and the Guild," he was condemned to pay one cask of ale.

The English families who lived in Leicester during the first two centuries after the Conquest, few of whom rose to any distinction, bore such names as Vinegar, Wade, Lewin, Ordriz, Aldwin, Baldwin, Abovetown, Saturday, Smallbone, and Six-and-twenty or Twentysixpence—a name given perhaps by the tax-collector. In the 14th century, however, burgesses of Anglo-Saxon descent began to make themselves more conspicuous.

A family bearing the old English name of Leofric appears frequently in the annals of Leicester during the 13th and 14th centuries. It has the distinction of heading the long roll of Leicester Aldermen, for in the year 1209 William, the son of Leveric, was called Alderman of the Guild. More than a hundred years later, the family was still flourishing, and produced at least three members who rose to some prominence about the middle of the 14th century, John, William and Richard. John Leverich, who entered the Guild Merchant in 1314, had a house in the old High Street, and led an active life in the service of the town. Amongst other municipal functions he filled the Mayor's seat in 1335-6, and for several years was chosen to represent the Borough in Parliament, travelling both to London and York, where in 1332 he stayed 22 days, and in 1335 a fortnight. After his return from York, in 1332, an entry occurs in the Mayor's accounts: "In wine given to him" (*i.e.*, John Leverich) "coming from Parliament telling the gossip (*narrand' rumores*) to the Mayor and others, 4d." William Leverich, who in the year 1354 was living in the Swinesmarket, represented the Borough in Parliament in 1339. Richard Leverich, whose goods were valued in 1336 at the sum of sixty shillings, no inconsiderable amount, was twice Mayor, and for some years Coroner, and he was also a Parliamentary Burgess. His second Mayoralty was distinguished by the visit to Leicester of the King and Queen of England, who came to attend the funeral of Earl Henry of Lancaster.

Another family of some note was named Alsi. One of the witnesses of Earl Robert Bossu's Charter in 1159 was Amfredus, the son of Alsi, and from that time onwards we hear of many persons who bore the name. Between 1260 and 1338 two John Alsis, presumably father and son, held most of the public offices of the town, and one or other of them was Mayor on ten occasions. They seem to have been wealthy, for in 1336 the son's goods were valued at the large sum of one hundred and twenty shillings. The richest householder at that time was Will o' the Waynhouse, whose personal goods were assessed at one hundred and thirty shillings. The Waynhouses were very prosperous burgesses in

the 14th century, and, in spite of their name, and although one of them is described as a wheelwright, it is probable that, like most other wealthy burgesses of the period, they made their money out of wool, which was for so many generations " the flower and strength and revenue and blood " of the midland counties. Indeed, William o' the Waynhouse was charged in 1335 with forestalling seven woolfellers, and was ordered to be distrained by the Grand Distress. Richard of the Waynhouse was living in the East Suburb late in the 13th century, and had a son, William, born about 1272, who was Mayor in 1318-19. He had land in the North Suburb, and was, as we have seen, one of the richest burgesses of his day, but a son of his, named John, who took his seat in the Guild Hall in 1330, and was Mayor in 1346-7, was nearly as wealthy. Roger, perhaps another son, entered the Guild in 1335, and was living in the Swinesmarket Quarter of the town in 1354. After that date the family disappears from the Record.

The Beebys were a family of mercers and drapers, who lived at Leicester in affluent circumstances for some generations. Robert of Beeby entered the Guild in 1199, and in the next century Peter, Walter and William were all, at different times, charged with selling cloth by measure " against the liberties of the Guild." William, who subsequently became a well-to-do mercer, was also fined, on another occasion, for using false yard-measures. Afterwards, however, he paid his entrance-money, and was admitted as a merchant of the Guild ; and from that time, 1323, the fortunes of the family began to rise. Richard was member for the Borough in 1341 and 1348, and Roger, also a draper, was member in 1372. Henry was Mayor three times, and represented the town in three Parliaments. But the most considerable of the Beeby family seems to have been Thomas, a mercer, who was born about 1314, and died about 1383. He was chosen Mayor in 1362, and again in 1368, and was member for the Borough four times. He lived in the Southgate, and in 1354 was taxed more heavily than any man in Leicester, except William of Dunstable. While he was Mayor in 1363, one Lambert, a " fleshewer," or flesher, was charged

with selling the meat of bulls which had not been baited, " taurorum *infugatorum*." The regulation, made more than a century ater, which forbade butchers to kill bulls that had not been baited, may therefore not have been a new one. It is possible, however, that the 15th century edict had no reference to the popular " sport " of bull-baiting, as Kelly supposed, but merely provided for the baiting or stall-feeding of cattle before slaughter, as a similar order made at Cambridge certainly did. The offence of the butcher Lambert was aggravated by his having used base language in the Saturday Market, contradicting and contemning the Mayor, and he was fined £10, but pardoned on the condition that if he offended again he should pay 100s. of silver or gold without any ransom. When Thomas Beeby died, between 1382 (the date of his will), and 1384 (the date of its proof), he left money to the Guilds of St. Margaret and St. Michael in Leicester, and he directed that when he was buried in St. Martin's Church, Leicester, no less than 300 pounds of wax should be burnt around his body, and afterwards distributed to the parish priests to use at masses. But for all his superstitious piety he seems to have been touched by some breath of the new religious spirit then beginning to ruffle the mediæval faith, for he also gave a legacy to the notorious Lollard, William de Swinderby, " Chaplain of St. John's Chapel, Leicester." He left 40s. each to the North and West Bridges, and 20s. for repair of a road called " le Wodegate."

One of the most prominent burgesses of Leicester in the first half of the 14th century was William de Clowne, who entered the Guild Merchant in the year 1318, " at the special order of the lord Earl, wherefore the fine is pardoned him as the order willed that nothing be taken of him." He was an important person even at that time, it is evident, and in the spring of the following year the Mayor sent him on behalf of the town a present of bread and beer. When John Brid built the West Bridge in 1325, he hired William de Clowne's cart. In 1326 William de Clowne subscribed 2s. to the lord Earl's present. He became Bailiff of Leicester in 1330, and held that office until 1343. In 1332 he represented the Borough in Parliament. During the

Mayoralty of John le Marewe (1333-34) William de Clowne's name heads the list of " honest men " who dined with the Mayor at Michaelmas and on other occasions ; and also of a deputation which was sent to Heigham by the lord's order " for the business of the community." When Queen Phillippa stayed at Leicester Abbey in July, 1336, wine was presented to her in the presence of William de Clowne and others coming with the Mayor. In a Tallage Roll of this year he appears as one of the wealthiest men in Leicester, his goods and chattels being valued at £6 sterling, and those of only one burgess were worth more. He sold that year to the Mayor a barrel of wine for presentation to the Earl of Lancaster. In the next year he presided at two municipal dinners, and his own Mayoralty, in 1338-39, was distinguished by a large and popular hospitality, in the course of which the community were regaled in the Saturday Market by minstrels playing on pipes and by 26 gallons of ale. On May 23rd, 1343, he executed a deed as Bailiff of Leicester, and after that date he disappears from the Municipal Record.

On the death of Richard de Tours in 1345, William de Clowne was elected Abbot of Leicester, and presided over the Abbey with marked ability until his death, which occurred on January 22nd, 1377. Was he the same William de Clowne as our Leicester burgess ? Was the merchant ordained in middle life, like the Bristol merchant, William Canynges, after laying down his municipal offices, and elected Abbot within three years ? If so, he must have been ordained some time after May, 1343, and before 1345. The Episcopal Register of the Diocese of Lincoln seems to show that there were no ordinations by the Bishop of Lincoln at that time, although there were a great many Letters Dismissory to enable men to be ordained by other bishops. Clowne's name does not appear, however, to be amongst them.* Moreover, Henry of Knighton does not mention that the Abbot had been a layman, and his silence seems conclusive, since he was not at all the kind of person to hold his tongue, had there been anything unusual about his Abbot's election. He may perhaps have been a son or nephew of the

* I am indebted to the Rev. Canon C. W. Foster for this information.

burgess. There were in fact two other persons of the name of Clowne living at Leicester in the early part of the 14th century. At any rate the Abbot was distinguished, like the burgess, not only for great business ability, but also for a generous hospitality and good nature. Henry of Knighton calls him " humanissimus," and the list of his benefactions to the Abbey is a long one. He obtained from the King a dispensation freeing the Abbey from the unprofitable duty of sending representatives up to Parliament; and he also procured exemption from payment of a heriot on an Abbot's death. He added considerably to the rent-roll of the rich monastery, and never seems to have gone to law without winning his case. He rebuilt the Abbey Gates and the Abbot's Hall, and spent a large sum on the Church. The monks were grateful to him for changing their black shoes for strong and useful boots, and he also obtained for them from the Pope a grant of liberty to eat white meat during the season of Advent. Clowne was a friend of the second Earl Henry, Duke of Lancaster, who made him an executor of his will. When the Duke died, in 1361, he was still a comparatively young man, and it is likely that he had derived great help from the experienced Abbot in framing the regulations for his College in the Newarke, the first witness to the Statutes drawn up for that purpose being William de Clowne. The Earl gave him a license to impark the woods of his Abbey, and made him a present of some deer from Leicester Forest; and when Clowne entertained Edward III. at the Abbey in 1363 the King gave him a license for holding a Dog-show, or Market for Greyhounds, within the Abbey walls. " He obtained a market for greyhounds and all kinds of dogs for hunting," wrote Henry of Knighton, " in which sports he frequently accompanied the King, princes and great lords: but he would privately tell his friends that he took no other delight in these sports but to gain opportunity to insinuate with those great men for some advantage to his house." The market was never established.

A month or two after his death Sir Ralph Basset of Sapcote, who had made him an executor of his will, executed a deed founding a charity in Sapcote Church, for two chaplains to pray

for the souls of himself and others, including " William Clowne, Abbot of Leicester."

Other important burgess families of the 13th and 14th centuries were the Kents, one of whom was Mayor twice and another six times, the Bushbys, the Marewes, the Martins, the Dunstables, the Warrens, the Staffords, the Knightcotes, and the Humberstones, of whom William Humberstone, who was Mayor in 1390, was one of the founders and benefactors of the Guild of Corpus Christi.

Several Goldsmiths are mentioned in the Borough Records between 1200 and 1400, one of whom was Mayor in 1351-2 and 1352-3, and another became a notorious Lollard, and, being excommunicated by Archbishop Courtney, was buried in unconsecrated ground in a spot still known as " Goldsmith's Grave."*

In the 15th and 16th centuries other names appear. The most considerable burgess families of that period, were, of course, the Herricks and the Wigstons, whose histories are too well known for repetition, and may be read in the pages of local historians.

Other important families were the Curteyses, the Newtons, Norrises, Staffords, Newcombes, Stanfords, Ellises, Mortons, Gillots, Chettles, Tatams, Reynolds and Clarkes.

Two members of the Curteys family, both named Piers, or Peter Curteys, held the office of Bailiff one after the other for about thirty-seven years.† The younger Piers was Alderman of the Twelfth or Southgate Ward, Justice of the Peace, and Mayor in 1482-83. He was attached to the household of King Edward the Fourth, who " in consideration of his good services to the King " gave him a dwelling-house near the South Gate

* His name was Roger; the name of the Mayor was William. James Thompson, in his account of Leicester Mayors, seems to have confused them. William was dead long before Archbishop Courtney's visitation, as we read of " Alicia, late the wife of William Goldsmith," more than a dozen years before.

† They were " bailiffs of the liberty," appointed by the Lord or King, and not town officials chosen by the community, as their immediate predecessors were. (Records of the Borough of Leicester, vol. ii. Introduction xxvi.)

of Leicester, which had been forfeited by Everard Digby, attainted of high treason in 1461. Afterwards Peter Curteys held the office of Keeper of the Wardrobe to King Richard the Third.

After the death of Richard III Piers Curteys became Keeper of the Wardrobe to Henry VII and also Usher to the King's Chamber and Keeper of the King's Palace at Westminster. When the power of electing parliamentary burgesses was divided in the year 1478 between the commonalty of the town and the Mayor and his Brethren the commons chose as their representative Peter Curteys, and in the years 1483, 1489, 1491 and 1495 they repeated their choice. Peter Curtis who entered the Guild in 1481, and is described as a " gentleman," may have been his son, but nothing more is known of him. The Will of Piers Curteys, Esquire, of Black Friars, London, Middlesex, Kingston, Surrey, and Leicester, was proved in the prerogative court of Canterbury in 1505 by Sir Everard Fielding, Knight, and is now at Somerset House. The testator declared that, if he died at Leicester, or about Leicester, his body should be buried in the Collegiate Church of Our Blessed Lady, St. Mary the Virgin, of Newark in the County of Leicester, and, after providing for a priest to sing for a year for his soul and for the souls of his " fader and moder brethern and sustren frends and benefactors and for all Christian soules," and giving legacies of 20s. to each of his four men-servants, and 13s. 4d. to each of two female servants, he bequeathed the residue of his estate " to be distributed and disposed by myn executors underwritten in deeds and werks of mercy and charitie as they by their good discrecions shall think to be most to the pleasure of god and for the welth of my soule." He devised his land in Middlesex in trust for sale, the net purchase money to provide an honest priest to pray for his soul and for the souls aforesaid as long as it will endure, " that is to say in the Church where my body shall be buried."

Of the Newton family, Thomas was a Merchant of the Staple of Calais, who entered the Guild of Leicester in 1500, became an Alderman and held several public offices. The better

known Alderman, Gabriel Newton, of the 18th century, may have been his descendant. The Will of Thomas Newton, dated October 8th, 1521, and proved in the prerogative court of Canterbury on November 11th, 1521, contains some unusual provisions.

"First I bequeath my soul to Almighty God and to his blessed mother and all the holy company of heaven and my body to be buried in the churchyard of St. Martin's in Leicester by my children and for my mortuary my best gown after the custom and manner Also I bequeath to the high altar of the said church for oblations forgotten 4d. Also to the mother church of Lincoln 4d. Also I will that my body be brought to the ground with all the priests and clerks of St. Martin's Church and all the three orders of friars within Leicester and the same friars after that they have brought my body to the church then they to go home and to sing dirige and mass for my soul unto the which three houses I bequeath 30s. Also the same day or shortly after I will there be done three trentals two of them in St. Martin's Church in Leicester and the third in the Friars in the Ashes Also I will that a stone be provided for to lie upon my body and also my wife's if it be her mind when God shall call her And in the same stone to be graven mine image and my wife's and all our children departed to God that is the number of eight Also I will my daughter Alice Newton being yet alive have £20 of my goods for her child's part And if God call her from this world then I will my wife have it to dispose as she shall seem best Unto my brother Hugh Newton one of my riding-coats and my best chamlet doublet with a pair of my best hose and a shirt Also I will that my brother Nicholas Newton have another of my riding-coats with a doublet of worsted a pair of hose cloth of white kersey a shirt a bonnet Also I bequeath to Robert Elen a doublet of St. Thomas worsted (wulsted) Also I will that my Executor make me a brother of the chapterhouse of the Friars in the Ashes of the order of St. Dominic and my wife also sister unto whom I bequeath for the same 6s. 8d. Also I will and desire master Sir William Fisher that he make me brother and my wife sister of the Observants

unto whom I bequeath 6s. 8d. Also I will and bequeath to master Sir William Fisher to pray for my soul and to be good to my wife 6s. 8d. Also I bequeath unto master Robert Harwar my grey ambling Gelding price 40s. and in money £3 whom I make Overseer of this my last Will and Testament whom I singularly trust will be good to my wife in her need for the calling in of my debts and for performing of this my last Will and Testament Remnant of my goods not bequeathed I freely give unto my wife Katherine Newton my wife whom I make sole Executrix." Sir William Fisher was, of course, the first Confrater of Wigston's Hospital.

William Newby was Mayor thrice, and four times Member for Leicester. In the year 1448 or 1449 he acted as the Chairman of a Commission appointed to enquire into certain cases which had arisen of persons in the service of Viscount Beaumont, of Sir Edward Grey, Lord Ferrers of Groby and others, who had contravened the Statutes of Livery and Maintenance. The household and the partisans of Lord Ferrers, exasperated at being deprived of their old customs, turned in their fury upon the unfortunate Commissioners, and grievously beat and wounded William Newby, threatening at the same time to beat all the others. At that period Queen Margaret of Anjou held the Honour of Leicester, which she had received as her dowry. When she heard of these doings, she wrote a letter wherein "considering the great hurt and harm of William Newby, our tenant," she did ordain, deem, and award that Lord Ferrers for him and for them that beat the said William Newby should "pay to the said William Newby 100 marks, and should be good lord to the said William Newby and to all other tenants." This penalty was a fairly substantial solatium for the wounded Mayor, being probably equivalent to about a thousand pounds of present money.

Norris, Noreys, Norice, Norreis, "the Northerner," is a fairly common name in the Leicester annals of the 12th and 13th centuries, and in the 15th and 16th there were several burgesses of some note who bore it. There was a John Norris who was Bailiff in 1439-41, and another was Mayor in 1503-4, and in

1505 Alderman of the Third Ward, which comprised the North Suburb. It would seem to be the Will of this John Norris dated August 29th, 1505, and proved April 22nd, 1510, which is now at Somerset House. He had two sons, William and John, and was a Tanner. He is described in his Will as "Johannes Nores Barker de Parochia Omnium Sanctorum villæ Leicester." He gave his body to be buried "in capella beatæ mariæ infra ecclesiam parochiæ Omnium Sanctorum villæ predict." After directions for his funeral, and legacies to All Saints, he gave 5 marks to be distributed among the poor on the day of his funeral. He left 3s. 4d. to the poor men's house within the college of the Newarke of Leicester, 2s. to the widows of St. John's and 2s. to the prisoners in Leicester town. He gave pecuniary legacies and real estate to his sons and daughters, and a close in All Saints' parish to provide an obit for his soul in All Saints' Church. To John Whitton he gave "unam togam penulatam cum foxe quam nuper emi de Wilhelmo Plummer," and he appointed his wife Margaret and William Whatton, Vicar of All Saints', Executors, and Dr. William Mason and Richard Reynold Overseers, Mason to have 20s. and Reynold "unum equum quem ultime emi." Another John Norris, a Butcher, entered the Guild in 1508. Alderman William Norris, who was Steward or Master of the Occupation of Tanners, was Mayor in 1567-68, and again in 1579-80. His history was recorded in a quaint epitaph inscribed on a wooden tablet in All Saints' Church, and his place of burial in the Churchyard is marked by a piece of rough forest granite, now just below the surface of the ground, without inscription, about 14 feet from the Chancel's outer wall. He had three wives, and died in 1615-16, in his 97th year. By his will he gave "thrice fifteen groats yearly to All Saints' poor," and 5 marks yearly to the second master of the Free School. It was probably another Alderman William Norris who paid a chief rent of nine pence a year "out of a house of his called the Fox in the North Gate," and who was in 1598 chosen Master or Steward of the Brewers' Company, but refused to serve. George Norris, another Tanner, was Mayor in the great year 1588-89, when Leicester received

her Charter of Incorporation, and the Spanish Armada was defeated. The Banquet given by George Norris in the Guild Hall to celebrate that event set the precedent for many sumptuous entertainments on subsequent anniversaries. The Will of " George Norrice, tanner, St. Margaret's, Leicester," was proved in the prerogative court of Canterbury in 1598. John Norris, gentleman, who was buried at All Saints' on July 30th, 1700, was the last male representative of this old Leicester family.

The name of Stafford, known in Leicester from an early date, rose to some prominence in the 14th century. John of Stafford, described as a " belleyetere," or bell-founder, entered the Guild in 1338, and occupied the Mayor's chair no less than four times. He was also chosen four or five times to represent the town in Parliament. He lived in the North quarter of the town and was a member of the Guild of the Assumption of the Blessed Mary in the Church of All Saints. It may be inferred that the Leicester bell-foundry, then, as afterwards, stood within that parish. There was a Bellfoundry at Leicester as early as 1307, when Roger le Belleyetere was a taxpayer. In 1348, Stephen, a Bellfounder, was a parishioner of All Saints. John Stafford cast the tenor bell of All Saints' Church, and, besides making the bells of Aylestone and Glen and other Leicestershire villages, worked for York Minster and for Brigg in Lincolnshire.

The Newcombes, too, were a great family of Bellfounders. Their business in All Saints' may have been the old 14th century foundry, but it cannot be traced back further than the year 1500, when William Mellers, " Bellheyterar," was admitted to the Guild Merchant. When he died, a few years later, Thomas Newcombe married his widow Margery, and carried on the business. Thomas Newcombe died in 1520, and was buried in All Saints' Church, where his tombstone may still be seen stript of its brasses and of the three bells which signified his calling. After his death his widow married again, and took the business to a third husband, Thomas Bett, who was Mayor of Leicester in the year 1529-30, and of whom it is pleasantly recorded that, on March 17th, 1530, when he came down to

sit on the bench, he was handed a posy consisting of budding hawthorn, beanflowers and a columbine flower, in token of the unusual precocity of the season. Two years later there was brought to Mr. Nicholas Reynold, then Mayor, on St. Leonard's Day (November 6th), " a chester of appletree blooms." The tomb of Thomas Bett lies in All Saints' Church. He left nearly all his property to Robert Newcombe, the eldest son of Thomas Newcombe, who had married his daughter Katharine. Robert Newcombe, in 1540, bought the house in the old High Street opposite to All Saints' Church, where the family resided and carried on the business. He was a Churchwarden of All Saints' Church, and was elected Mayor of Leicester in 1550. The accounts of the estate of this well-to-do mediæval burgess admit us into his household on a footing of unusual intimacy. They were rendered to the governing body of the town, to whom all the expenditure on orphans had to be submitted. Richard Pratt, one of the Executors, returned the value of his testator's assets at £261 16s. 8d. The funeral expenses were £6 13s. 4d.; and the Legacies comprised £31 13s. 4d. to Wife; £20 each to Sons, Edward and William, and £23 6s. 8d. to his daughter Anne in money, and in plate £31 6s. 8d.; to his Curate, 3s. 4d.; To five men servants, ten shillings each; to two maids, ten shillings; to the poor, twenty shillings: to the overseers of his Will, twenty shillings; for the mortuary, ten shillings. The expenses of Probate were 33s. 4d.; the keep of four children of testator and two maids to attend them for sixteen weeks was £10 13s. 4d. The wages of two servants, £4 2s. 4d. After allowing the difference between the estimate made in the inventory and the actual prices received, there was a loss " in the price of a certain metal " of £12 13s. 4d.; in the price of the wood, £3 6s. 8d.; and the price of the bark, £1 6s. 8d., and in the price of two kine, thirty-two shillings. The total of all these expenses was stated to be £150 14s. 4d.

The debts paid since the testator's death were £10 7s. 7d. The expenses of the children since the death were £34 14s. 2½d., and comprised such items as " three yards of frieze to make Edward a coat, 3 shillings," " Elizabeth Newcombe's board at

Mr. Herrick's for twelve weeks 13s. 4d.," " For the charges of Robert Newcombe by the space of three years and a half at £6 a year, £21," " For the charges of Margaret Newcombe for one year and a quarter at £6 the year, £7 10s." Sundry charges for collecting debts and travelling came to £13 13s. 4d., and the grand total of payments was £209 9s. 6½d., leaving a balance in the Executor's hands of £52 7s. 1½d. " And yet this Accountant standeth answerable to Robert, Elizabeth, Marjorie, and Marget, four of the children of the said testator, to every of them £20, and to Anne Duckett £6 13s. 4d., and six silver spoons by estimation thirty shillings, £88 3s. 4d.; so that the same Accountant is now in surplusage £35 16s. 2½d., towards the levying whereof there are remaining towards this Accountant debts desperate due to his said testator (total £39 12s. 8d.)."

Three of Robert Newcombe's sons, Thomas, Robert and Edward, were members of the business and noted bell-founders. An account of the various bells cast by them will be found in North's " Church Bells of Leicestershire." Thomas died in 1580. Edward was living in 1611. Three of his sons, another Robert, another Thomas and another William, continued the business. Thomas was described as " tanner and bell-founder." The last dated bells of the Newcombes are of the year 1612; after that time the foundry seems to have been taken over by Hugh Watts, a relative by marriage, and a bell-founder whose reputation had been for many years established.

The name of Stanford, or Stamford, occurs frequently in the earlier annals of Leicester. It was Alexander of Stamford who put himself at the head of the fullers, when they challenged the authority of the Merchants' Guild in 1275, and he was aided and abetted by Ivo de Stamford. In the 16th century a most prolific family of this name were flourishing in the parish of St. Nicholas, some of whose members held public positions. Thomas Stanford, Butcher, who was a Churchwarden of St. Nicholas, and Alderman of the Fifth, or St. Nicholas Ward, was chosen Mayor of the Borough in the year 1559, and again in 1573. During his first Mayoralty he was sent to London, " to try the liberties of the town." In March, 1574, he received

twenty nobles (£6 13s. 4d.), on condition that he should assure to the town land worth 10s. a year, or an annuity of 10s. secured on "the nowe mansion dwelling house of the said Thomas Stanford in Leicester." He may be identified with the "old Mr. Stanford," who left a legacy of £10 for the upkeep of the Free Grammar School, which was built during his second Mayoralty. The legacy was not paid, and a suit was commenced in the Spiritual Court, before Dr. Chippingdale, prebendary of Lincoln, against the testator's son, Richard the Elder, who was also a Butcher and an Alderman of the town. The case was settled by Richard Stanford and Thomas his son delivering to the Mayor and Burgesses a bond of £20 for the payment of £10 in ten years by instalments of £1 at the dwellinghouse of the Mayor.

John Stanford, Butcher and Grazier, who was Mayor of Leicester in 1576 and 1592, was a son of old Thomas Stanford. He was a godson of John Herrick the Elder of Leicester, Ironmonger, who died in 1589, and he married, as his second wife, Herrick's daughter, Elizabeth, the sister of Alderman Robert Herrick. In the year 1572 he was chosen to represent Leicester in Parliament, when his expenses, at 2s. a day, amounted to £7 14s. 0d. He was Alderman of the Ward which comprised the old High Street from the Cross to the South Gate, and he was instrumental in paving the street and also in rebuilding the Cross. A few years earlier he had complained of the "muckell" which stood near his house, and a resolution was passed at a Common Hall, prohibiting any more garbage or muck being added to it. In 1579 he sold to the town for £4 and his charges the bailiwick of Leicester, which he had purchased from John Danet. In the same year he made a donation of 40s. towards the cost of a scarlet gown for the Recorder, the rest of the Company giving 5s. apiece. In the next year, when he was again Member for the Borough, his charges for nine weeks Parliamentary attendances came to £6 6s. Some dissatisfaction was expressed in the Council Chamber that these charges were allowed, for Stanford was reported to have said when elected that "he would not crave his charge except he did good to the

town." The general opinion was that "if Mr. Stanford do at any time hereafter, by reason of his Burgess-ship, any good to the town, then his charges to be allowed; otherwise he to repay again that which he hath received for the two Parliaments past." The wages paid to Borough Members had long been a burden upon the town's finances, which was bitterly resented at Leicester as at other places. In this case there was, no doubt, an additional grievance, because the recipient was, to all appearances, the richest man in Leicester. At any rate, his personal effects were valued in 1590 at a higher sum than those of any other townsman. Among the Leicestershire subscribers of £25 towards the defence of this country at the time of the Spanish Armada in 1588 was "John Stanford, Grazier." When he was again appointed Burgess for the town in 1592 he agreed to bear his own charges, though his colleague, James Clarke, was "to have his charge." In 1597 his son John was appointed a Burgess only on condition of bearing his own expenses.

In 1594 the grazier seems to have been living at a house in Belgrave Gate, which he rented from the town. At that time the South end of Leicester was infected with plague, and for that reason the Mayor could not take the Judges to sit at the Castle as usual, but was obliged, as he said, "to lodge them at Mr. Stanford's house, and to have them sit at the Town Hall." In the last years of his life Stanford retired to Barkby, and died at Elmesthorpe* on March 17th, 1603. He was buried at Barkby. His son, John Stanford, was a prominent lawyer, who during the latter years of the 16th century was busied with various pieces of litigation in which the town of Leicester was concerned, chiefly in connection with the purchase of the Newarke Grange. A letter of his, dated January 26th, 1592, which is quoted by Thompson in his History of Leicester, shows the independence of his spirit. He had chambers at Gray's Inn, and a house, it would seem, at Barkby Thorpe. He was appointed Recorder of the Borough of Leicester in 1603, at a yearly salary of £6 13s. 4d., but died in the December of the

* There were Stanfords then living at Elmesthorpe: *see* Visitation of Leicester 1619, p. 137.

same year, only a few months after his father. He left one son Thomas, who was Patron of the Vicarage of Barkby when Burton wrote his History, about 1622. It is not clear who was the John Stanford authorized in 1613 to issue King James I's farthing tokens. It cannot have been either the Grazier or the Recorder, as North thought, for both of them had been dead for ten years.

The name of Ellis occurs in the Records of the Borough from the 13th century onwards, but the Ellises who became prominent in Elizabethan times came out of Yorkshire. James Ellis was appointed one of the Mayor's brethren in 1575, and filled many public offices, being Mayor of Leicester in 1586-87, and in 1602-3. He had a draper's shop, which he closed on the Sabbath Day. It is possible that he may also have been a brewer, for " Mr. Ellis " was returned in 1585 among the Leicester brewers able to deliver 240 barrels of ale a week or more. During his second Mayoralty the death of good Queen Bess was proclaimed at the High Cross and at the Gainsborough. On the 23rd day of June, 1603, James Ellis rode out beyond the West Bridge with six Aldermen to welcome the new Queen and her son, who were passing through the town. He presented to her and to the young princes standing cups with covers of silver double gilt, which had been subscribed for by the town. The Princess Elizabeth, who arrived the night before, did not receive a cup, but she was also welcomed by the Mayor and regaled with claret and rhenish and sugar. In his Will, which bears date the 4th day of September, 1615, James Ellis the Elder of the Borough of Leicester, Woollen Draper, gave " towards the repairing of the Church of St. Martin in Leicester four marks ; to the poor people of the new hospital called Wigston's hospital 40s. ; to the poor people of the parish of All Saints 20s. in bread ; and to the rest of the poor people in Leicester 40s. in bread." He stated that he was born " in the parish of Horton in Ryplesdale in the county of York," and gave legacies to the Church and poor people of that parish. After various family devises and bequests, the Testator declared, " Item I give and bequeath my house with the appurtenances in the Southgate within the borough of Leicester now in the

occupation of Francis Braunston, tailor, unto the poor people of the old hospital in or near Leicester aforesaid to them and their successors for ever So that I will that they shall not put out my said tenant Francis Braunston nor reare his rent he paying the rent he now payeth and keeping the said house in good and sufficient repair." He also gave "to the second schoolmaster of the Free School in Leicester for the time being and to his successors for ever one annuity of 26s. 8d. a year to be paid quarterly forth of my house in the parish of All Saints in Leicester now in the occupation of William Noone, Costerd-monger, and for default of payment I will that (he and they) shall enter upon and have and hold the said house to him and his successors for ever—my said tenant William Noone shall not be put forth of the said house paying the rent he now payeth and keeping the same in good and sufficient repair." The testator appointed as Executor his kinsman, James Ellis, the Younger, of the Borough of Leicester, Woollen Draper, and as Overseers Thomas Walker of Leicester, barber cherurgeon and Allen Backhouse of Leicester, yeoman. The Will was read over to James Ellis, and acknowledged by him to be his last will and testament on October 22nd, 1617, and it was proved by the Executor on May 6th, 1618. The particulars of the gifts to Trinity Hospital and to the Free School differ materially in the Will which is at Somerset House from those given by Nichols, and they have therefore been set out in full. The date of the Will (November 7th, 1617) given by Nichols is incorrect, but it may be the date of the testator's death.

The younger James Ellis, who was Mayor in 1623, was also a liberal benefactor. By his Will, bearing date the 16th January, 1628, he gave towards the maintenance of the poor of Trinity Hospital a dismantled house in St. Mary's parish with a yard and dovecot, a house in All Saints' parish and a piece of ground on the Town Wall. He also gave £3 to the Free Grammar School, and an annuity of 16s. 8d. to the poor of the parish of St. Mary de Castro.

The family of Morton was long established in Leicester. William de Mortona entered the Guild Merchant early in the

13th century. William Morton in 1389 was one of the Wardens of the Guild of All Saints' Church. In the last half of the 16th century Alderman William Morton, linen-draper, was a person of some importance. He lived in the Stocks House at the High Cross, attached to which, on the northern side of Dead Lane, was a garden and orchard, part of which he sold off to accommodate the new Grammar School that was built in 1574. He was an adherent of the Earl of Huntingdon, but no friend of Sir Edward Hastings. Most of the public offices of the town were filled by him, and he was Mayor three times, 1582, 1596 and 1612. His son became Archdeacon of Durham.

The Gillots seem to have come from Arnesby to settle in Leicester about the middle of the 14th century. Richard Gillot, who was a grocer, became Alderman of the Seventh Ward, which comprised most of the present High Street, and was Mayor in 1467. He caused a number of regulations to be passed at a Common Hall, which, in the words of James Thompson, " placed almost despotic power in the hands of the Mayor, who resembled the king of a small state more than the chief functionary of a free community." It was probably his son, another Richard, who was Mayor in 1497 and 1512, and whose sister Isabella married William Wigston, the founder of Wigston's Hospital. The Will of Richard Gillot, senior, was proved at Leicester in 1519. Four other Gillots, following in the footsteps of the two Richards, became Mayors and Aldermen of Leicester in the course of the next hundred years.

Towards the end of the 16th century the Chettles made their appearance on the municipal stage. Ralph Chettle was a leading Baker of the town, and one of the plaintiffs in the action which they brought against William Becket. In 1591 he became Mayor, and died before the end of 1600, for it was recorded in the annals of that year that " Mr. Ralph Chettle, baker, one of the Aldermen of the town of Leicester, deceased, by his last Will and Testament did give and bequeath unto the Mayor and Burgesses of the town of Leicester the sum of £5, to be yearly bestowed in coals for the use of the poor in Leicester for ever." His son Ralph Chettle was a woollen-draper, who

bought a house in the Swinesmarket in the year 1594; and in the year 1605 he and his wife Elizabeth sold to Alderman Robert Herrick for £35 a house described as being " in the end of the street in the Saturday Market stead," presumably in Cheapside, near Herrick's own house.

The Chettle who in 1585 was certified as able to serve 240 barrels of beer a week may have been Thomas Chettle, who in 1598 was appointed to be one of the Wardens of the Occupation of Brewers, but Ralph Chettle the Baker was also a Brewer. There were many more Chettles—all Ralphs and Thomases.

During the 16th century three Tatams rose to some prominence in Leicester. Arthur Tatam became a prosperous tradesman and filled many important offices after he had sown his wild oats, for in his earlier days he was twice in one year dismissed from the Town Council " for certain disorders and for libelling " and " for his disorders committed against Mr. Hallam and Mr. Ellis." John Tatam, who was a wealthy Innkeeper as well as a Tanner and Alderman of the Northgate Ward, filled most of the municipal offices and was Mayor three times, in 1566-7, 1577-8 and 1590-1. He died in 1597, and his Will was proved at Leicester in the same year.

George Tatam, who, like all the other Tatams, was a Tanner, and Warden of the Occupation of Tanners, succeeded his brother John as Alderman of the Northgate, but died two years afterwards in 1599, and was buried at All Saints'. He was the most energetic member of the family, and was constantly engaged in various transactions on behalf of the town, especially in connection with landed property. He assisted in the purchase of the Newarke Grange, and in the suit with Dr. Chippingdale about the North Mills. He lived in the North Gate, where his goods were valued at £7 7s. 0d., but was Alderman of another Ward. He was Mayor in 1580 and again in 1594.

There were Reynolds in Leicester in the 14th century, but the name became better known a hundred years later. There seem to have been at least three generations of John Reynolds. John the Elder was Mayor in 1434, 1439, 1450 and 1458, and he liked the position so well that in 1461 he executed a deed,

declaring that " of benevolent and faithful heart for the goodly zeal and effectual pleasure that he had unto the honourable and worshipful office of Mayoralty of the town of Leicester, the which was by him IIII sundry years maintained and occupied," he granted unto the said Mayoralty a house in the High Street of Leicester by the High Cross there on condition that the Mayor for the time being should find a priest perpetually to sing for the souls of the said John Reynolds, his wife, his father and mother, his brother and all his benefactors. He was a brother of the Guild of Corpus Christi, from whom he rented a house in the parish of St. Peter, and when his wife died, a few years before the above-mentioned deed of grant, she was buried with the rites of the Guild. It was probably his son, another John Reynolds, who in 1460 was acting as Deputy for Richard Hotoft, the Town Bailiff, had a cottage in Dead Lane, in the parish of St. Peter, and became Alderman of the Seventh Ward, which comprised the western portion of the modern High Street, and Mayor in 1463, when he was described as a " yeoman." His son, another John, entered the Guild Merchant in 1469, and when his own father died, sometime before 1478, he in his turn became John Reynolds the Elder. He was a Justice of the Peace for several years and Mayor in 1477.

There were many Clarkes among the town officials of the 15th century, but three, who became well-known in the 16th, deserve special mention. They are Alderman James Clarke, Thomas Clarke of the Blue Boar, and Thomas Clarke, the Shoemaker.

James Clarke was an active member of the Council, who became Mayor in 1569, and again in 1585, and was Member for the Borough in 1592. He died on October 16th, 1599. During the year of his second Mayoralty he had occasion to visit London on the Town's business, and some items in the expenses of his journey are worth quoting :—

> " Fyrst : paid for the solinge of my bootes xii d.
> Item for a male pillyon and ii girthes of leyther for the same xii d.
> Item paid for a boxe to carrye wrytings in viii d.

19 Nov. at Northampton, my charges there iis. xi d.
Sayterdaye night att Marckgate, my charges there ii s. iii d.
Sondaye the xxi Nov., London.
Item my supper viii d.
Fyer i d." Total (including numerous charges for shoe-leather) £4 5s. od.

It was this James Clarke who sold to the Town Council, in 1572, at the price of £10 os. 6d., a salt-cellar of silver gilt, to be lent to the Mayor for his year, and to be yearly accounted for by the Chamberlains. This ornament continued in use until the year 1709, when it was ordered by the Council of the day that " the old Salt be exchanged for two wax silver candlesticks, a pair of silver snuffers and stand."

The Will of this Elizabethan worthy is of some interest. It is dated 15th October, 1599, the day before his death, and begins thus :—" I, James Clarke, one of the Aldermen of the Borough of Leicester, mercer, being weak in body but strong in mind and of perfect memory (the Lord therefore be praised), and having before mine eyes that in this vale of misery is nothing permanent, desiring therefore to be dissolved and to be with the Lord my saviour Jesus Christ in his celestial kingdom, perfectly believing through the merits of his passion to have remission of my sins and life everlasting which by me considered (meaning to set and dispose that worldly substance that God hath lent me in good order) do make this my last Will and Testament." The Testator desired to be buried in St. Martin's Church, " or else where it shall please God to appoint," and he gave 2s. to the repairing of that church, 2s. to the " poor folks of the new hospital called Mr. Wigston's Hospital," 6d. to the poor widows of St. John's, 2s. to the poor prisoners in the County Gaol, 1s. to the poor prisoners in the Borough Gaol, and 40s. to be given at his funeral to the poor people of the Borough in bread. After various family devises and bequests, he gave 20s. to Richard Heyton, his prentice, and 20s. to Elizabeth Greene, " the poor girl which I do keep," 5s. to each of his servants and 4d. to each of his godchildren. He gave to his

wife £40, " bedding, chairs, cushions, table, form, stools, half a garnish of vessels (*i.e.*, half a set of table vessels), bason, two candlesticks, carpet cloth, table cloths, towells, tablenapkins, brass pot that hath been used to still aquavite withall, and a kettle." He also gave her £18 10s.; " and I straitly charge her (as she shall answer the same before God) to pay unto one whom she knoweth I have appointed her to pay the same unto." The Will contains the following curious clause :—" All the glass windows in and about my said now dwelling house, and all other windows, all the wainscot, wainscot doors, portal doors, benches, and settles, and the locks and keys to the doors, bolts, planchers, racks, and mangers of the stable in and about my said house shall remain as Heirlooms to my said house for ever." James Clarke appointed his wife sole Executrix, and she proved the Will on February 28th, 1599. The Overseers were Mr. Hugh Hunter and William Dethick, the Town Clerk.

Of the two contemporary Thomas Clarkes, the most prominent was the wealthy landlord of the Blue Boar Inn, of whom some account is given elsewhere in this volume. The other, the shoemaker, was a philanthropist who devoted himself to improving the condition of the Leicester poor by securing better facilities for trade and more encouragement to labour. In connection with the Council's scheme for providing work and training by cloth-making, spinning, and jersey-knitting, he obtained from the town in 1592 a Lease for life of the old hospital of St. John, on his undertaking to build thereon a Wool Hall at his own expense. His wife Margaret taught poor children to knit jerseys, and the Town Council lent her money free of interest, to enable her to carry on the work. The useful benevolence of the Clarkes attracted the attention of the Earl of Huntingdon, who wrote a letter to the Mayor of Leicester, expressing his wish that a sum of £40, which his late brother had given for the relief of the poor by setting them to work, should be handed over to Thomas and Margaret Clarke. Thomas Clarke and his wife promised to employ a hundred people, but it does not seem that they ever obtained the money.

Among other names which were familiar in Leicester town three or four centuries ago, may be noticed Biggs, Burgess, Berridge, Harvey, Hind, Pratt, Ludlam, Worship, Freake, Ive, Fowler, Middleton, Yates, Nix, Wilcocks, Manby, Davey, Davenport, Cotton, Eyre, Orton, Fletcher, Burton, Adcock, Alsop, Barlow, Hallam, Chamberlain, Gadsby, Vickers, Ward and Wood.

All these families, and many others, played their parts on the civic stage, and most of them remain within the old borough ; so that the reborn city of to-day is united still by living bonds with the small mediæval community from which it has sprung.

Old Blue Boar Inn

XII.

THE TRAGEDY OF THE BLUE BOAR.

THE annals of Leicester do not contain any story more curious and interesting than that of the fateful visit paid to the Blue Boar Inn by King Richard the Third, two days before his death, and the legacy of woe which that disastrous event is said to have bequeathed to a future generation, The tale, which is partly true, and partly shrouded in mystery, has something of the sombre fatalism of a Greek Tragedy. Indeed it has not wholly escaped the dramatist, for, on December 4th, 1837, a year after the destruction of the Blue Boar Inn, a play called " Black Anna's Bower, or the Maniac of the Dane Hills," was performed at the Leicester Theatre. The plot of this drama turned upon the murder of Mrs. Clarke, hereinafter related, and Black Anna, who is a local spirit of evil repute, played a part therein somewhat like that of the Three Witches in Macbeth. The story falls naturally into four episodes :— I. The King's Visit. II. The King's Fate. III. The Treasure in the Bedstead ; and IV. The Murder.

I. THE KING'S VISIT.

On Saturday, August the 20th, 1485, as we may conclude from the available evidence,* King Richard III left Nottingham

*Different dates have been assigned by Hutton and others, but this is the only one that seems to fit in with all the known facts. Kelly, owing to a curious mistake, wrote of the 20th as a Sunday. He relied upon a passage in the Croyland *Chronicle*, which he quoted in the following form :—" *On the Lord's Day* before the Feast of Bartholomew the Apostle (August 24th), the King proceeded on his way " ; whence he concluded that it was on a Sunday that Richard came to Leicester. But the passage does not refer to the King's march from Nottingham, but to his departure from Leicester, " opidum Leicestrense egressus." The original passage runs thus :—" Die autem Dominico ante festum Bartholomei Apostoli Rex maxima pompa diadema portans in capite cum Duce Norfolchiæ Johanne de Howard ac Henrico Percy comite Northumbriæ ceterisque magnificis Dominis Militibus et armigeris populariumque multitudine infinita opidum Leicestrense egressus satis per intercursores edoctus ubi hostes sequenti nocte de verisimili manere volebant ad octo militaria ab eo opido distantia juxta Abbathiam de Mirivall castra metatus est." Historiae Croylandensis Continuatio. Gale. Rerum Anglicarum Scriptores I, 573-4.

Castle, which had been his residence for more than two months ; and, having ridden all day in the midst of his Army, with only one considerable interval of rest, he entered the North Gate of Leicester just before the setting of the sun. Passing down the ancient High Street on his tall white charger, he is said to have drawn rein, before reaching the High Cross, at the Blue Boar Inn, a beautiful building, with a tall gable front and a projecting balcony of carved oak, which stood on the western side of the street, at the corner of the lane leading to the Hall of the Guild Merchant, and which was demolished about eighty-four years ago.* Here, in the large front chamber, according to tradition, Richard spent that night ; and a bedstead, on which he is supposed to have slept, became famous at the beginning of the 17th century as one of the curiosities of Leicester. The local tradition is unsupported by any authority, but it is not contrary to known facts. It has been asked why the King did not sleep at Leicester Castle, where he had stayed just two years before ; but a campaigner, on the eve of a decisive battle, may have had several reasons for preferring to pass the one night in a less ostentatious place of sojourn. At any rate, there is no evidence of his having slept elsewhere. On this point Kelly made some very just remarks. " Whatever may have been the reason," he wrote, " for the King's sleeping at an Inn, as there is nothing beyond mere supposition to invalidate its truth, we confess that we believe in this, as we would in all local historical traditions not contradicted by positive evidence, from a conviction that no such tradition, although it may in process of time become exaggerated by oral transmission, is without some foundation of truth ; and more especially one connected with so tragic an event as the last visit of Richard III, all the particulars connected with which must have made a deep and lasting impression on

*A very good idea of the appearance presented by this Inn in King Richard's time may be obtained from a restored view, published in the Transactions of the Leicestershire Archæological Society, which was sketched by Mr. Joseph Goddard, and founded upon an architectural examination and measurement of the building made just before its destruction. A detailed account of its architectural features will be found in a paper contributed by James Thompson to the Journal of the British Archæological Association for the year 1863.

the minds of the inhabitants of the town, who would naturally transmit them to their descendants."

That the building called the Blue Boar was in existence in 1485 is also known only from tradition, but there is no reason to doubt it; and in the next century it was one of the principal inns of Leicester. Kelly thought it highly probable that the house was originally known as the "White Boar," the cognizance of Richard III, and that it did not receive the name of the Blue Boar until after Richard's death, "when," as Grafton wrote, "the proud, bragging white boar which was his badge was violently rased and plucked down from every sign and place where it might be espied." There is no evidence, however, of any such change of name; and it may be remarked that "a bleue Bore with his tuskis and his cleis and his membres of gold" was one of the badges of Richard, Duke of York, the father of Edward IV, so that the house may have been known by that sign before the reign of Richard the Third, especially in view of the defection of Leicester from the Lancastrians and its adherence to the cause of Edward IV. There is no authority whatever for Nichols' statement, that the inn was afterwards called the Blue Bell. This error was founded on a mistake of Throsby, and has been repeated by James Thompson and by later writers. The hotel which Throsby and Nichols describe by that name as the scene of some riots in the 18th century was the Bell in Humberstone Gate.

On the next morning, Sunday, August 21st, the King left Leicester, with all his Army, in great pomp, preceded by the Royal Standard, and wearing his jewelled crown. But there were voices, which attended his steps, prophecying woe. As he rode through the "South Gate," so we are told (though it was of course through the West Gate that his road lay), a blind beggar proclaimed the coming of his doom. And as he passed over the Bow Bridge, and struck the parapet with his spur, a "wise woman" foretold that where his spur had struck, there should his head be broken.

The fatal battle took place on the following day.

II. THE KING'S FATE.

On the evening of the day on which the Battle of Bosworth Field had been lost and won, both the protagonists of the drama arrived at Leicester; Henry riding in triumph with Richard's crown upon his head, and the body of the fallen King ignominiously thrown naked across a horse, with the feet hanging down on one side and the head and arms on the other. "The dead corps of King Richarde was as shamefully caryed to the Towne of Leycestre," wrote Holinshed, "as he gorgeously the day before with pompe and pryde departed out of the same Towne." It seems certain that the conqueror allowed the corpse to be exposed publicly for two days, in order, probably, to advertise and demonstrate the fact of Richard's death. This exhibition was generally supposed by the historians of Leicester, Throsby, Nichols and Thompson, to have taken place at the old Guild Hall in Blue Boar Lane, but this has been disproved by Kelly, on the strength of a document from the Harleian MSS, published in Hutton's "Bosworth Field," which points to the Collegiate Church of Our Lady of the Newarke as the place of exhibition. "They brought King Richard thither that night as naked as ever he was born, and in the Newarke was he laid that many a man might see." Kelly might also have quoted the popular ballads which were composed after this event, and which may be considered respectable authorities on a point of this kind. In one of these ballads it is said that, after Richard had been "dungen to death with many derfe strokes," he was cast on a "capull," or horse (caballus, cheval), and carried to Leicester, "and naked into Newarke." Or, as the author of the ballad of "Bosworth Field" puts it:—

> "Then they rode to Lester that night
> With our noble Prince King Henerye;
> They brought King Richard thither with might,
> As naked as he borne might be,
> And in Newarke Laid was hee,
> That many a one might look on him.
> Thus ffortunes raignes most marvelouslye
> Both with Emperour and with King."

After this public exhibition, the body was buried, without any funeral solemnities, in the Church of the Grey Friars. The

account of this miserable episode written by a former rector of Church Langton in Leicestershire, who was a contemporary, is worth quoting. " Interea Ricardi corpus, cuncto nudatum vestitu, ac dorso equi impositum, capite et brachiis et cruribus utrimque pendentibus, Leicestriam ad coenobium Franciscanorum monachorum deportant, spectaculum mehercule miserabile, sed hominis vita dignum, ibique sine ullo funeris honore biduo post terra humatur."

Strange stories grew up out of this singular illustration of the irony of fate. One was told about the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of Edward IV, who afterwards became the wife of Henry VII. She is said by a balladist to have been in Leicester at the time of the battle of Bosworth Field, and there to have welcomed the arrival of the dead body of her enemy with derisive taunts.

" Thé carryed him naked into Leicester,
And buckled his haire under his chin.
Bessye mett him with a merry cheere ;
These were the words she sayd to him.
How likest thou slaying of my brethren twaine ?
She spake these words to him alowde."

Another tale, not quite so impossible, is told about a son of Richard III, known as Richard Plantagenet, then sixteen years of age. On August 21st, 1485, it is said, this boy was instructed by his father to meet him in London after the battle, and the King promised that he would then and there publicly acknowledge him as his son. When the battle was over, therefore, young Richard set out for London. But before he had gone far, his progress was arrested by a tragic spectacle. " Just as I came into Leicester," he said, " I saw a dead body brought to town upon a horse. And upon looking steadfastly upon it, I found it to be my father."*

It was not until after the lapse of ten years that Richard's successor thought well to erect any memorial over his remains. He then caused a tomb to be built " of many-coloured marble," adorned with a statue of the dead King. This tombstone,

* On the truth of this story, which has been doubted, see the *Gentleman's Magazine*, July and August, 1767.

which Hutton, who had never seen it, called " a scrubby alabaster monument," cost £10 1s. 0d. A Latin epitaph, intended to be inscribed on the tomb, stating that it was put up at King Henry's expense, was never actually placed there. It will be found in Nichols' History, with an English translation.

Two contradictory stories are told about the fate of this tomb. According to one tradition, it was broken open by the crowd, when the church was destroyed after the dissolution of the monastery, and the bones of the dead King, after being carried through the town with jeers and insults, were thrown over the Bow Bridge. A spot near the western end of the Bridge was pointed out as their resting-place, and a watering-trough for horses, which stood at the White Horse Inn in Gallowtree-gate, was asserted to have been the coffin which once held Richard's remains. This old trough seems to have been an ancient stone coffin, and certainly not of a kind used in King Richard's time. It was long notorious. John Evelyn, in his Diary, records (9th August, 1654) that he visited the " old and ragged city of Leicester, famous for the tomb of the tyrant Richard III, which is now converted into a cistern, at which (I think) cattle drink." Hutton said that it had disappeared when he went to Leicester in 1758 in order to inspect it. But Crutwell wrote in 1806 : " there is a little part of it still preserved at the White Horse Inn, in which one may observe some appearance of the fitting for retaining the head and shoulders." The trough is said to have been broken up in the time of George I, and used for steps to a cellar.

The supposed connection of Bow Bridge with the Plantagenet King owing to the prophecy of the " wise woman," and the subsequent fate attributed to his marauded bones, caused that structure to become known in later times as " King Richard's Bridge " ; and, when the bridge was rebuilt in the year 1863, a tablet was placed over it bearing the legend, " Near this spot lie the remains of Richard III, the last of the Plantagenets."

The other story relating to the King's tomb occurs in the Memoirs of the Wren family, and is contained in some notes

written by Christopher Wren, Dean of Windsor (father of Sir Christopher), who was born in the year 1589. " The wicked and tyrannical Prince, King Richard III," he wrote, " being slain at Bosworth, his body was begged by the Nuns of Leicester (*sic*), and buried in their Chapel there ; at the dissolution whereof the place of his burial happened to fall into the bounds of a citizen's garden, which being after purchased by Mr. Robert Herrick (sometime Mayor of Leicester) was by him covered with a handsome stone pillar, three foot high, with this inscription, ' Here lies the body of Richard III, some time King of England.' This he showed me (Chr. Wren) walking in his garden, *Anno* 1612." The future Dean was at that time 23 years of age, and tutor to the eldest son of Sir William Herrick, of Beaumanor.

The site of the Grey Friars, where Richard was buried, had been sold to Robert Herrick by Sir Robert Catlyn. Samuel Herrick, Robert's great grandson, sold it in 1711 to Thomas Noble, whose devisee, Roger Ruding, of Westcotes, after allotting a piece of ground throughout for a common street now called New Street, sold it to different purchasers. The mansion-house with its gardens, lying on the eastward side of the Grey Friars Estate, was conveyed in 1752 to Richard Garle, whose heirs, after his death in 1776, sold it to Thomas Pares. Thomas Pares enlarged the house, which was considered " the principal private residence in Leicester " ; but in 1824, the year of his own death, he seems to have sold all the property, excepting the site of Pares' Banking House, to Beaumont Burnaby. Beaumont Burnaby, who died there, devised " the messuage or mansion house formerly called ' The Grey Friars " to his wife Mary Burnaby. It appears then to have been divided into two separate houses, one of which was occupied by Mrs. Burnaby, who died there on February 7th, 1866, having by her will devised the property to Trustees upon Trust for sale. The Trustees of her Will afterwards conveyed it for the sum of £6,400 to Messrs. Alfred Burgess, George Toller, George Baines, Richard Angrave and Charles R. Crossley. These gentlemen had taken the conveyance as Trustees for the Leicester Corporation, and

in January, 1871, it was resolved by the Town Council that Municipal Buildings should be erected upon this site. In the following year, however, this resolution was rescinded, and it was agreed that the new Town Hall and offices should be built on the land where the old Cattle Market used to be held. The Corporation then cleared the ground which they had bought from Mrs. Burnaby's Trustees, and made a street through it named " The Grey Friars." Subsequently, by an Indenture dated the 30th September, 1873, the Corporation took a conveyance of the land from their five Trustees, by the following description :—" All that piece of land situate in the parish of St. Martin's in the Borough of Leicester and lying between two streets there now called Friar Lane and St. Martin's and which said piece of land was lately the site of a messuage or mansion-house for some years formerly occupied as two messuages with the gardens yards and out-buildings thereto belonging known as ' the Grey Friars,' and one of which said messuages was formerly in the occupation of Mary Burnaby widow deceased and the other of which said messuages was formerly in the occupation of John Henry Davis and which said mansion-house and premises have since the date of the lastly recited deed " (the Conveyance to the Corporation's Trustees), " been pulled down and the ground cleared and a street formed upon the said land by the Corporation." The Corporation of Leicester have since the date of this deed parted with the whole of the land, which is now built on. The site of the old mansion-house and grounds at the present day comprises the Grey Friars Street, with the Leicester Savings Bank and two blocks of offices, extending from St. Martin's to Friar Lane, on the West side of the street, and the London County Westminster and Parr's Bank and blocks of offices, extending from St. Martin's to Friar Lane, on the East side. If then the Grey Friars' Church and the burial place of Richard III were in Robert Herrick's garden, Richard's remains must now lie, if undisturbed, somewhere beneath the Grey Friars Street or the buildings that face it. The exact place cannot be more nearly identified.

The story told by Wren is far the more credible of the two. The popular tale of the desecration of Richard's tomb rests on no good authority, and seems to have grown up in the following manner :—

Very soon after the Battle of Bosworth Field, a report became current that the defeated King had been buried "in a ditch like a dog." Four years after the battle, in the course of some legal proceedings which took place at York, this report was contradicted, and it was stated as a fact that Richard was not buried in a ditch, "for the King's grace had been pleased to bury him in a worshipful place." There is indeed no question about the burial at the Grey Friars' Church, which is quite well established. Nevertheless, the common rumour survived, and seems to have been the basis of a statement made by Bacon, in his life of Henry VII, that, although Henry "of his nobleness gave charge unto the friars of Leicester to see an honourable interment to be given to him, yet the religious people themselves being not far from the humours of the vulgar, neglected it; wherein, nevertheless, they did not incur any man's blame or censure." Holinshed mentions the burial of Richard in the Church of the Grey Friars, and the erection of the alabaster monument, but says not a word about any subsequent disturbance of the tomb, either in the first edition of his Chronicle, published in 1577, or in the enlarged edition of 1587. The tradition of this desecration appears to be mentioned first by John Speed, in his "History of Great Britain," which was published in 1611. He states that, at the suppression of the Grey Friars' monastery, Richard's monument was "pulled down and utterly defaced, since when his grave overgrown with nettles and weeds is very obscure and not to be found. Only the stone chest wherein his corpse lay is now made a drinking-trough for horses at a common inn. His body also (as tradition hath delivered), was borne out of the city, and contemptuously bestowed under the end of Bow Bridge." In the account of Leicestershire contained in his "Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain," Speed omitted the latter part of this statement, mentioning only Richard's burial at the Grey Friars' monastery, "whose suppression hath suppressed the plot-place of his grave,

and only the stone-chest wherein he was laid (a drinking-trough now for horses in a common inn), retaineth the memory of that great Monarch's Funeral." The whole of the passage quoted above from Speed's " History " was repeated almost verbatim by Sir Richard Baker in 1643, and was quoted by Nichols from Baker's Chronicle.* But Throsby added some embellishments of his own. " At the dissolution of the religious houses in the succeeding reign," he wrote, " about 50 years after his (Richard's) death, it (the monument), was ruinated with the church, the grave ransacked, and his bones taken in triumph through the streets, and at last thrown over the bridge over which he rode to the fatal battle of Bosworth."

In the year 1846 a stone coffin was found, in laying the foundations of a house in Halford Street, which contained some remains. James Thompson conjectured that they were those of Richard the Third, who, he thought, had been hastily re-interred in an old Norman coffin by the Warden and brethren of the Grey Friars, before the dissolution of their Priory. It is, however, very difficult to accept this hypothesis, which is based on the assumption that Richard's body was removed from its resting-place at the Grey Friars. But this, in all probability, is a mere legend.

The destruction of the Grey Friars' monastery took place in the lifetime of Robert Herrick, who was born in 1540; and the events connected with it must have been fresh in the recollection of his contemporaries; yet, in 1612, he does not appear to have been aware of the tradition which had been published for the first time by Speed in the previous year, or, if so, he had evidently no faith in it. We cannot do better than follow his example.

*Some writers seem to have thought that this quotation came originally from Holinshed. Thus James Thompson repeated the passage in the Midland Counties Historical Collector for December 1st, 1858, and stated that it came from " Holinshed (quoted by Nichols), writing in the reign of Elizabeth (1577)." And, when the new Bow Bridge was being built, those who wished to place near it a tablet, commemorating King Richard's death, adduced, in a local newspaper, the authority of Holinshed. But I have not been able to trace the tradition to an earlier source than Speed, who does not mention where he obtained it. A reference to Holinshed in the margin of his book applies only to the preceding account of the King's burial.

III. THE TREASURE IN THE BEDSTEAD.

The story of the Treasure in the Bedstead was first written down in the middle of the 17th century by Sir Roger Twysden, "who had it," says Throsby, "from persons of undoubted credit, who were not only inhabitants of Leicester, but saw the murderers executed."

Twysden's account of the prevailing local tradition, (which is contained in his "Commonplace Book," and not in his "Decem Scriptores," as Kelly stated in his "Royal Progresses"), runs thus :—

"When King Richard III marched into Leicestershire against Henry, Earl of Richmond, afterwards Henry VII, he lay at the Blue Boar Inn, in the town of Leicester, where was left a large wooden bedstead, gilded in some places, which, after his defeat and death in the battle of Bosworth, was left, either through haste, or as a thing of little value (the bedding being all taken from it) to the people of the house ; thenceforward this old bedstead, which was boarded at the bottom (as the manner was in those days), became a piece of standing furniture and passed from tenant to tenant with the inn. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth this house was kept by one Mr. Clark, who put a bed on this bedstead, which his wife going to make hastily, and jumbling the bedstead, a piece of gold dropped out. This excited the woman's curiosity. She narrowly examined this antiquated piece of furniture, and finding it had a double bottom, took off the uppermost with a chisel, upon which she discovered the place between them filled with gold, part of it coined by Richard III, and the rest of it in earlier times. Mr. Clark, her husband, concealed this piece of good fortune, though by degrees the effects of it became known, for he became rich from a low condition, and in the space of a few years Mayor of the town, and then the story of the bedstead came to be rumoured by the servants. At his death he left his estate to his wife, who still continued to keep the Inn, though she was known to be very rich, which put some wicked persons upon engaging the maid-servant to assist in robbing her. These folks, to the number of seven, lodged in the house, plundered it, and carried

off some horse-loads of valuable things, and yet left a considerable number of valuables scattered about the floor. As for Mrs. Clark herself, who was very fat, she endeavoured to cry out for help, upon which her maid thrust her fingers down her throat and choked her, for which fact she was burnt, and the seven men who were her accomplices were hanged at Leicester, some time in 1613."

There are several mistakes in this account, as will appear, but the only material one to notice at present is that the trial took place in 1605 and the sentence was executed soon after, and not in 1613. It appears that soon after the circumstances of the murder had been published abroad, with the romantic story of hidden treasure, a bedstead was being exhibited at Leicester, either at the Blue Boar Inn, or elsewhere, which purported to be the one in which the treasure had been found, and in which King Richard had slept. It did not however figure at the trial, in the course of which nothing whatever was said about King Richard's treasure. But, after the trial, the fame of the bedstead became firmly established, and endured for many generations. Henry Peacham, who afterwards became famous as the author of "The Complete Gentleman," wrote some barbarous hexameters which were prefixed to Tom Coryat's "Crudities," first published in 1611, and in the course of these verses he referred to various sights and exhibitions of his time that might be seen for a penny, including—

> "Drakes ship at Detford, King Richards bed-sted i' Leyster,
> The White Hall Whale-bones, the silver Bason i' Chester."

In the latter half of the 18th century this bedstead was still regarded as one of the wonders of Leicester. When Samuel Ireland, the father of the Shakesperian forger, visited the town, in the course of an artistic and literary tour, about 1790, he proceeded at once to make enquiries about the "two curious remains" which the town of Leicester boasted, and "which must be admitted to have reference to his (Shakespeare's) works: the house and bed in which Richard the Third slept the night before the battle of Bosworth, or rather Sutton, Field." He was shown over the house, "which is still," he wrote, "in good

preservation, and the room in which the King slept is so spacious as to cover the whole premises ; it is situated on the first floor agreeable to a style of building at that time very common in most of our ancient inns."

Ireland made a sketch of the building, and another of the bedstead, about which he wrote :—" The bedstead from which the above sketch is made, is now in the possession of Mr. Alderman Drake, who purchased it for about forty shillings of one of the servants of the forementioned inn about twenty years ago. It is of oak, and richly carved with Gothic ornaments suitable to the taste of the time, but at what period it was made is not clearly ascertained, though a date, I am informed, appeared on one of the feet, when it was last taken down, but no person had the curiosity to notice it. When purchased by Mr. Drake much of the old gilding appeared about the ornaments. Some particulars of this bedstead, I also understand, are preserved in the records of the corporation."

Upon the death of Mr. Drake, who was Mayor of Leicester in 1773, the bedstead passed to his grandson, the Rev. Matthew Drake Babington, who gave it, in 1797, to Thomas Babington of Rothley Temple. In 1831, Professor Churchill Babington, to whom it then belonged, offered to sell it for £100 to the Corporation of Leicester, to be placed in the Town Museum. This offer was, however, declined ; and the bedstead was afterwards purchased by Mr. Perry Herrick of Beaumanor.

Mr. John Gough Nichols, writing in the Gentleman's Magazine for July, 1845, raised the objection that the bedstead then (and still) at Beaumanor, could not have been King Richard's because it is undoubtedly of Elizabethan workmanship. However, Mr. James Thompson, who examined it in 1872, reported that a distinction must be made between the bedstock or framework and the super-imposed bedstead, and he found that the carved and decorated portions of the bedstead were of the Elizabethan or Jacobean period, but the bed-stock itself he concluded to be of an earlier time. Hutton stated that Richard brought to the Blue Boar Inn his own bedstead, " of wood, large and in some places gilt. It continued there 200 years

after he left the place, and its remains are now in the possession of Alderman Drake. It had a wooden bottom, and under that a false one, of the same materials, like a floor and its under-ceiling. Between these two bottoms was concealed a quantity of gold coin worth about £300 of our present money, but then worth many times that sum. Thus he personally watched his treasure and slept on his military chest." All this is mere assertion, and is to a large extent contradicted by the results of Thompson's investigation, full particulars of which will be found in an article which he contributed to the " Reliquary." (Vol. XII, p. 211, *sqq.*) There is, however, another statement, made by Throsby, which is worth consideration. He says that, after the murder, the bed came into the possession of a servant of the Blue Boar, " and before it came into the hands of Mr. Alderman Drake it had been many years in the Red Cross Street, where it had been cut to make it fit for a low room. The feet which were cut off were 2 feet 6 inches long, and each square 6 inches. The present feet, as one may see by the engraving, are modern. I have the old feet in my possession and the headboard which were taken from it when it was shortened." If the Elizabethan super-structure was raised on the old oak bed-stock while it was at the Blue Boar in the time of the Clarkes or their predecessors, and afterwards exhibited as King Richard's Bedstead, perhaps by the servant into whose hands it is said to have come, when the legend of the treasure had gone abroad, it would be a relic so well known that, even after the lapse of more than 150 years, Mr. Drake, who is said to have been a furniture broker, might have had no difficulty in identifying it ; and as Throsby appears to have been himself cognisant of the circumstances under which it was removed from the Inn to Redcross Street, and cut down to fit into its new quarters, and even to have secured some of the discarded parts, his evidence is of value. But, although there is a strong presumption that the foundation of the bed now at Beaumanor was the one on which King Richard slept, the story of the hidden treasure, which gave it its celebrity, and probably preserved its existence, has little claim upon our belief. The tale was never heard until after the burglary, and was, in all probability, suggested by that

event. The thieves certainly did discover a considerable amount of treasure located in the house, but not more than a wealthy burgess of the period might be expected to hoard out of savings acquired in the ordinary course of business. And Thomas Clarke was a man of exceptional ability. He belonged to the little band of shrewd and enlightened men who governed the destinies of Elizabethan Leicester with singular prudence and foresight. Something of his character may be gathered from the following slight sketch of his municipal career. There were in his time several other persons of the same name who became of some note, especially James Clarke, who was Mayor in 1585-86, and another Thomas Clarke, a shoemaker, who distinguished himself by his philanthropic work; but the landlord of the Blue Boar was a far more important personality than either of these. He was prominently concerned in dealings with land and other property on behalf of the town, and in several negotiations and affairs of great moment. He held the highest municipal offices. His name appears first in the Town Records in the year 1568, when he was elected one of the Borough Chamberlains, and for the next thirty-five years his activity is constantly in evidence. In the following year he was appointed one of the three Meat Testers, and towards the end of his life he became one of the Leather Testers. He was a Collector of Subsidy in 1576, and a Surveyor of Town Lands in 1584. In 1576-77 he was Coroner. He was Steward of the Fair in five years between 1571 and 1600, Mayor in 1583-84, and again in 1598-99, and Alderman between 1574 and 1600 in ten separate years. He was one of four prominent burgesses chosen in 1598 to ride over to Ashby-de-la-Zouch and confer with the Earl of Huntingdon in respect of his demand for soldiers, a matter that required tactful handling; and two years later he was among the six leading townsmen who were charged by the Earl, as Lieutenant of the County, with the furnishing of a good armed man out of Leicester for the Queen's service, "who should be no vagrant or suspected person or likely to run away." On a Subsidy Roll of the year 1590 only four persons living in Leicester were assessed at a higher sum than the landlord of the Blue Boar.

He was a Brewer as well as an Innkeeper, and when an enquiry was made in 1585 by the Purveyor of the Queen's Buttery, Thomas Clarke undertook to supply weekly 40 "tune" (*i.e.*, 240 barrels) of ale or beer, "or above if nede bee," at the rate of 2s. the dozen.

He was respected as a man of probity and public spirit, as appears from the high place which he held in the estimation of such worthy men as Robert Herrick and the wise Recorder of Leicester, Richard Parkins, both of whom join in holding him among men "of meet affection to the town." He must have had a reputation among his colleagues for shrewd judgment and knowledge of the value of land and houses, as we may conclude from his appointment as one of the Surveyors of town lands. The circumstances under which he was appointed were these. When the Corporation were about to carry out ambitious schemes of land purchase, they found that, in order to do so, they would be obliged to sell some, if not all, of the land which they already held. They agreed, therefore, that a survey should be made of all the town lands, "and such things as be out of lease to consider what value they be of, and what wood there is upon any land, and to value what every tree is worth and every farm and piece of ground." The report of this Commission is not extant, but a year or two later the Corporation began to speak of the "Twenty Pound Lands," and to declare that they had only £20 worth of land a year, which may indicate some result of the valuation. It is not to be supposed, however, that these "Twenty Pound Lands" were an insignificant amount of property. On the contrary, they comprised a very considerable area of land and extensive house property, both in the town and county of Leicester, the particulars of which are given by Throsby.

About the year 1585 these lands and houses were assigned by the Council to two of their number, George Tatam, who had been Mayor in 1580-1, and was elected Mayor a second time in 1594, and Thomas Clarke, the landlord of the Blue Boar. The arrangement seems to have been that Tatam and Clarke should, in consideration for the lands, advance £600, thirty

years' purchase, to be used by the Council in completing their bargain with Francis Hastings for his term in half the Newarke Grange estate; and that Tatam and Clarke should sell all or part of the lands assigned to them, and then pay or release to the Town, either in money or land, whatever surplus might be left, after they had recouped themselves for their loan. Two years later, on a further transaction relating to the Grange, Robert Herrick joined with Thomas Clarke in advancing £160.*

All these dealings with the property of the town may have been carried out in a perfectly honest manner, and there can be no doubt that the aims of the Corporation were disinterested, and that their policy was of the greatest benefit to succeeding generations. On the other hand, as everything was done secretly, there was ample room for abuse. At any rate, the townspeople grew suspicious, and began to complain that "such as had the chief dealing for us" sold the land and disposed of the money "at their own pleasures and private contentions among themselves." In 1593 an Order of the Privy Council was made for a Commission to enquire into the matter. This Order was read in the Town Council Chamber, and the Council retaliated by resolving that anyone disclosing the secrets of the Common Hall should forfeit £5. It should, however, be added, that this resolution was only the re-enactment of one passed in 1564. Thenceforth they were more careful to avoid the appearance of evil. Undoubtedly there had been some abuse, the members of the governing body taking the first chances of leasing and buying the town property, and some of the public land actually having been given to Town officials as perquisites; but there is no definite imputation of dishonesty, and none was proved. Tatam and Clarke paid over the surplus due to the town, and conveyed back the unsold land. Their reputation remained unimpaired, and the assistance which they gave to enable the town to carry through their large scheme was of the utmost value. This purchase of the Newarke Grange estate was, indeed, an extremely complicated transaction, and Clarke

*On a previous occasion Thomas Clarke had been associated with Robert Herrick in giving a joint bond for £200, in connection with the Corporation's scheme for establishing a cloth-factory.

did not live to see the completion of it. It involved the buying up of several different estates and interests in the property, and actually covered a period of thirty-seven years, the first purchase being made in 1585 and the last in 1622. Moreover, there were difficulties about the title, and towards the end of the 16th century the Corporation became involved in legal proceedings concerning certain closes known as the " Frith Closes." They contained about 60 acres of land, which had been the reputed property of the Newarke College for very many years ; but after their bargain with Francis Hastings and the Crown the Leicester Corporation still had difficulties with this part of the estate. In 1598 a petition was sent up by them complaining against a Lease of these closes being granted by the Duchy of Lancaster to one Robert Worship. They obtained a general stay of further proceedings, but not without difficulty. About the year 1601 there was a suit with one Lister about the same closes, which cost the town a large sum of money.

The Corporation's case seems to have been that, when Henry VIII disforested the Frith, the Dean and Chapter of the Newarke College produced a Charter proving their common of pasture in the Frith for more than 24 beasts, 7 mares and one stud horse. The King thereupon granted them rights of pasture in common with other tenants, in 120 acres of the land ; but afterwards he divided the 120 acres, specially granting one half, being the closes in dispute, to the Newarke College, and the other half to other tenants. The Corporation claimed that these closes, so allotted to the College, passed to them with the rest of the Grange estate. But it appears that the special grant from Henry VIII to the College was missing, and the Corporation were advised that, unless it could be found, their case was " very hard in law," and that they could only rest on " equity and good conscience," although they had given " great sums " for the closes. Search was made for the missing document at the Tower, at the " Old " and the " New " Chanceries of the Duchy of Lancaster, at the Augmentation Office, and at the Savoy and Gray's Inn, but it does not appear to have been found.

Other important services which Thomas Clarke rendered

to Leicester were given in connection with the two Charters of Queen Elizabeth, and the grants of land therein contained. James Thompson, in his History of the town, does not give Clarke his due credit in regard to the first charter, the obtaining of which he attributes solely to " the influence at Court possessed by the Earl of Huntingdon, and the active exertions of Mr. Parkins, the Recorder, and of Richard Archer (who was a bailiff and collector, and therefore knew all the particulars relating to the property belonging to the Duchy of Lancaster in Leicester)." But the Recorder and Archer had the assistance of Thomas Clarke, who was appointed to act with them, and he accompanied them on their journeys to York and London, in 1586 and 1587, when the business relating to the reconstruction of the borough was discussed and carried through. He also had a hand in the second charter, which was granted in the year of his second Mayoralty.

The wife of the enterprising landlord of the Blue Boar, whose maiden name was Agnes Davy, and who was married to Thomas Clarke at St. Martin's Church in August, 1567, was not always, it appears, as discreet as her husband, and led him, towards the end of his career, into an undignified imbroglio. In the year 1597, she went one day to the house of Joan Cradock to collect the rent. Mrs. Cradock told her, apparently in good faith, that she did not know to whom she ought to pay the rent, whether to the Queen or to Mrs. Clarke, the house having been previously, one may assume, Crown property. Thereupon Mrs. Clarke is said to have spoken disrespectfully of the Queen. This episode came in time to the persistently pricked-up ears of George Belgrave. This busybody happened to have been engaged as Magistrate in a case in which the husband of Joan Cradock was accused of theft, and Cradock told him what Mrs. Clarke had said, and persuaded him that the Clarkes had persecuted him ever since and driven him out of Leicester. Belgrave then wrote to Clarke, declaring that Mrs. Cradock's accusation against Mrs. Clarke ought to be investigated. On receiving this letter, Clarke seems to have gone to Mrs. Cradock's house. " It is told me," he said, " that Mistress Clarke should

say to you—' The Queen shall have a rope, before she shall have my house.' " He then forced Mrs. Cradock, as she stated, to bring the matter before the Magistrates. No examination took place until October, 1598, more than a year after the event. Mrs. Clarke denied on oath that she had made use of the words complained of, and the case then dropped. It was revived, however, in the following autumn, when another witness appeared against Mrs. Clarke, but there is no record of any conviction and the case does not appear to have been carried any further.

Thomas Clarke died on June 28th, 1603, and was buried in St. Martin's Church in Leicester, on the 30th of the same month.

His Will, which bears date the 15th day of June, 1603, is at Somerset House. It does not contain any reference to the Blue Boar Inn, nor to the famous bedstead. Thomas Clarke " Innholder," gave the bulk of his fortune to his wife during her widowhood, with remainder to his kinswoman, Margaret Fearne, if she should marry with his supervisor's consent, but otherwise to his overseers to be disposed amongst his other kinsfolk. Among other legacies he gave " to my loving friends the Mayor Bailiffs and Burgesses of the Borough of Leicester and to their successors for ever for the Under Usher of the Free School an annuity of 20s. out of the Orchard purchased by me the Testator from the Mayor and Burgesses of Leicester in St. Nicholas' parish near the Soar " ; also £5, " whereof they owe me £3," to be yearly thereafter employed " in sea coal for the use of the poor people of Leicester." He also left to the widows of St. John's Hospital, twenty shillings ; to the mother of Margaret Fearne, two milch cows ; to William Dethick, the Town Clerk, forty shillings ; to George Brook, one of the Town Chamberlains, " my best taffata doublett," and to John Wilkinson, his brother-in-law, " my best hat." If this John Wilkinson was the glover of that name who had been " carted " a year or two before with one Mary Smith, he would hardly expect to receive a legacy from his wealthy relative.

The testator appointed his wife sole executrix, and the first-named overseer of his Will was Mr. Thomas Sacheverell,

the Confrater of Wigston's Hospital, afterwards Vicar of St. Martin's, who married Robert Herrick's daughter Mary.

IV. THE MURDER.

In the autumn of the year 1604, a certain Thomas Harrison, who had done bodily harm to a man called Phillips, fled out of Staffordshire. He came to Leicester, and lodged for three nights at the Blue Boar Inn. While he was there, he paid his addresses to Alice Grimbold, one of the maid-servants, and Alice told him that her mistress, Mrs. Clarke, then a widow, kept a great deal of money in the house. According to Harrison's evidence, which is of no great value, Grimbold also suggested to him that he should come again with a friend and get some of this money. "The maid," he stated, "was the only setter of the match, for they had not dealt therein but for her procurement."

Harrison went away, and told Adam Bonus, a Lichfield cook, what he had heard, and talked over the proposed robbery. Bonus communicated it to Edward Bradshaw, another Staffordshire man, and the real villain of the piece. On Saturday, February 2nd, 1604-1605, Harrison, Bonus and Bradshaw were to have met at the Blue Boar, and Harrison and Bradshaw arrived there on that day. Bonus did not come to Leicester until the following day, and he then saw Bradshaw, and told him that he had decided to have nothing to do with the robbery.

On Sunday evening, February 3rd, Mrs. Clarke was in the house with her two guests, Harrison and Bradshaw, and two maid-servants. About ten o'clock the maids went to the stables to water the horses. While they were doing this, they became temporarily separated, whereupon Bradshaw seized and bound one of them who was in the stables. Then Harrison secured the other, and, in the meantime, Bradshaw, who had returned to the house, seized Mrs. Clarke, and tied her up also. The two malefactors then released Grimbold, and, taking her into the house, made her give them her mistress's keys. All

three went to Mrs. Clarke's parlour, where there were three large chests, which they opened. One of these contained only linen, another was full of "writings," but out of the third coffer they took away several bags, full of gold and silver. The robbers carried off six or seven bags containing money, the amount of which was variously estimated at from £200 to £500 or more, and they left one bag for Alice.

It does not appear from the existing evidence why Mrs. Clarke was killed, but the reason given by Twysden, that she was murdered because she began to cry out for help, offers a probable explanation. According to his account, the murder was committed by Alice Grimbold, but there is no evidence of this, and the testimony goes to show that Mrs. Clarke was killed by Bradshaw. Grimbold was tied up in the chimney before the ruffians rode away with their plunder. Harrison's plea that she was the instigator of the plot is hardly borne out by the facts, and she acted throughout the evening under compulsion.

Mrs. Clarke was buried at St. Martin's two days later.

As soon as the robbery and murder were discovered on the morning after the crime, Bonus was arrested and examined on the same day before the Deputy Mayor of Leicester, two Justices and two Coroners. He established his own innocence, and disclosed all that he knew of the plot. The depositions of Alice Grimbold were taken on the same day and on the following Wednesday. Harrison and Bradshaw were committed to the prison at Stafford without bail; but Harrison was brought back to Leicester prison soon afterwards, and there examined on February 20th, and again on March 1st, before Thomas Chettle, then Mayor of Leicester, and other magistrates. Once more he was examined specially, by order of the Judge, on March 22nd, not about the crime itself, but with regard to an attempt which had been made to frustrate the ends of justice. For the clever scoundrel, Edward Bradshaw, had conceived the brilliant idea of using part of the proceeds of the robbery in order to obtain his own release from Stafford gaol. So when his brother-in-law, one Littleton, came to visit him in the prison, Bradshaw told him that the stolen money had been hidden in the bank

of a ditch at Pooley Park in Warwickshire, and asked him to fetch it away. Littleton, according to Harrison's evidence, found most of the hidden money, and brought £80, part of it, to procure the prisoner's release. Some of this money was distributed among various agents, and the rest was paid over, directly or indirectly, to Lord Stafford—how much, Bradshaw said he did not know. Lord Stafford thereupon bailed out the prisoner, who took refuge for a time at Bowdisworth Park, in Staffordshire, the residence of Humphrey Chatterton, whose wife, as Harrison attested, "laboured the Lord Stafford for Bradshaw's bail, and had money for her pains." But the Leicestershire magistrates got wind of this shameful transaction, and on February 17th, 1604-05, they despatched an urgent letter to the Lord Chief Justice of England, informing him that Lord Stafford had gone up to London to procure Bradshaw's pardon, and asking him that a warrant might be issued for the apprehension of Bradshaw, "because it is thought he will come to London to the Lord Stafford's lodgings"; and they prayed that, as soon as Bradshaw was arrested, he should be committed to the gaol at Leicester. The arrest was made, and the case was tried at the Spring Assizes which began at Leicester on March 25th, 1605.* Bradshaw was examined on March 26th, and was subsequently condemned to be executed for the murder of Mrs. Clarke, while the unfortunate servant, Alice Grimbold, was actually sentenced to be burned at the stake.

The original depositions of the witnesses in this case are still in existence, although partly defective, and they have been transcribed in the Appendix to Kelly's "Royal Progresses."

The crime itself is a very sordid one, and would have been forgotten long ago but for its legendary association with the last of the Plantagenets. Nevertheless, the case is interesting, not only as an example of the harsh and unsatisfactory character of the administration of justice three hundred years ago, but also because it illustrates the danger to which justice was then sometimes exposed, owing to the corrupt dealings of powerful men.

*The date given by Thompson and Kelly, March 25th, 1606, must be erroneous. The witnesses were bound over in February, 1604-5, to give evidence at the next assizes.

XIII.

THE DESTRUCTION OF MEDIÆVAL LEICESTER.

THE destruction of mediæval Leicester began with the passing of the Plantagenets and the dismantling of Leicester Castle. Fifty or sixty years later, the zeal of the religious reformer swept away many of the most characteristic and beautiful monuments of mediæval art. Other lingering remains of the Middle Age were afterwards allowed to fall into decay, and, within the last 150 years, many have been deliberately destroyed, under the blind pressure of growing life. Only a few are still to be found.

The Castle of Leicester, the great "Palace of the Midlands during the most splendid period of the Middle Ages," may be said to have passed its meridian glory in the lifetime of John of Gaunt. But long after his death it retained its old prestige. On the 18th of February, 1425-6, the Parliament of England assembled in its great Hall, and again met there, in all probability, on the 29th of April, 1450, when they had adjourned to Leicester from Westminster in consequence of the insalubrity of the Thames air. The last authentic record of its occupation seems to be a letter written by Richard the Third to the King of France, which is dated August 18th, 1483, "from my Castle of Leicester." In the reign of Henry VII it fell into disuse. When John Leland saw it, sometime about the year 1536, it had already lost its ancient pride. "The Castle," he wrote, "standing near the West Bridge, is at this time a thing of small estimation." Royal Commissioners, appointed by Henry VIII, reported that it was rapidly deteriorating; and, although a Constable of the Castle was nominated, little was done to prevent its decay.* The only part preserved was the great Hall. The spacious yard of the Castle, which so many a time had been gay with the flower of England's chivalry, began to be made use of as a pound for

* The Constable's Salary was only £3 os. 4d. a year, less than that of any other Castle Keeper in England.

Newarke Main Gateway

enclosing stray cattle and horses and swine. Thus, in the year 1533, some countrymen, who threatened that they would come into the town to trade there against the regulations, were informed by the Bailiff that, if they did so, their horses should be " set in the Castle," and they themselves punished.

A hundred years later, a survey of the Castle was made, from which it appears that the Hall, a great Chamber, a Parlour, a great Kitchen, a larder and a dungeon, with out-offices, were then standing, in very bad repair.

The siege of Leicester in 1645 did further damage to the ruined fabric; and, early in the following century, the eastern side of the Hall was taken down and replaced by a brick front. At the same time the Kitchen was converted into a coach-house. The division of the great Hall into two separate Courts—a civil and criminal court, with an entrance lobby between them and a grand jury room above it—was effected, according to Thompson, in the year 1821, involving, as he remarked, " an entire sacrifice of all the historic and venerable associations of the fabric." The old Castle House was then entirely demolished.

There remain at the present day (1) the ancient Norman Hall, almost entirely concealed beneath a modern disguise; (2) the Tudor Gateway and Porter's Lodge, near the North door of St. Mary's Church; (3) the Dungeon, or Cellar;* (4) the Turret Gateway leading into the Newarke, which is said to have been reduced to its present ruinous condition during a tempestuous election in 1832; and (5) Part of Southern defence.

About the middle of the 16th century, the outward appearance of Leicester suffered a remarkable change. The fine old

*Mr. A. Hamilton Thompson writes: " I suppose this may be the ' dungeon ' referred to in the 17th century survey, at a date when the term had long been applied to vaults of a prison-like appearance. But ' dungeon,' in surveys and technical documents of an earlier date, is habitually used in the proper sense of ' donjon,' as equivalent to the great tower or keep of a castle. The word *dunio* is applied primarily to the earthen mount of a castle, then to the buildings of wood or stone upon it, and then to the keep, whether built on a mount or standing by itself. The term ' dungeon,' in the sense of prison, seems to arise from the presence of vaults, not necessarily prisons, in such towers. I rather wonder whether, at the date of the survey, the keep on the mount may not have been standing still in bad repair."

church of the Abbey, and most of the monastic buildings, were dismantled ; the three great religious Houses of the town were levelled with the ground ; the churches were stripped of their ornaments and images, and all other " monuments of superstition," and the lovely Collegiate church of the Newarke was utterly destroyed. Before the end of the century, the Berehill Cross, and most of the other Town Crosses, were pulled down, the ancient Hospital of St. John was converted into a Wool-Hall, and the property of all the religious Guilds and Colleges was taken away from them, and passed, in many cases, into the hands of speculators.

The effects of the 16th century cataclysm may be summarised thus :—

Two old churches had then already fallen into disuse ; St. Michael's had disappeared, and St. Peter's was fast becoming a ruin. Five other parish churches in the town, those of St. Nicholas, St. Margaret, All Saints, St. Mary and St. Martin, survived the storm, stripped almost bare and impoverished, but structurally intact, and they still exist. The little church of St. Leonard survived for about a hundred years more.

The church of the Abbey, the church of the Grey Friars, the church of St. Clement, the church of the Austin Friars and the Newarke church were all dismantled or destroyed. The chapel of St. Sepulchre, or St. James, and the chapel of St. John in Belgravegate were left to decay, and fell into ruins. The little chapel on the West Bridge was converted into a dwelling-house. The Hospital of St. John, after the failure of the Wool-Hall, was replaced by new almshouses, and the adjoining church of the Hospital made room for a Town Prison. The fate of Wigston's Hospital has been related already. The Hall and Chantry Houses of the Guild of Corpus Christi were bought by the Town, and are still in existence.

Some parts of the ancient walls of the Abbey may yet be seen, and particularly the brick wall in Abbey Lane, built by Bishop John Penny, at the beginning of the 16th century, which still bears his initials, wrought in ornamental brickwork, and one lonely niche, long bereft of its tutelary image. And it is

probable that Penny's alabaster tomb, now in the chancel of St. Margaret's Church, was moved thither from the Lady Chapel of the Abbey, though on this point antiquarians differ.

The only existing relic of the Friars' houses may be a small portion of the boundary wall of the Grey Friars' monastery, to which Mr. Henry Hartopp has called attention. This is a red brick wall which stands in Peacock Lane, opposite the site of the chapel of Wigston's Hospital. It is of the same date as Bishop Penny's wall, or possibly rather earlier, and it must, therefore, it would seem, have formed part of the northern boundary of the Grey Friars' property. It is possible that some fragments of the southern wall may also survive, for it is only seventy years since Mr. Stockdale Hardy called attention to some "slight and dispersed portions of the boundary walls," and stated that "the chambers of a few houses in what is still called Friars' Lane now rest upon some of them." Fragments of St. Mary's College seem to survive about Bakehouse Lane.

Little of the ancient Newarke is now left. Throsby said that the foundations and ruins of the College were finally demolished about the year 1690. The following buildings are existing at the present day :—

(1) The massive 14th century entrance Gate of the College, now known as the Magazine Gateway, remains practically unaltered within, although the exterior has been recased. Until 1904 all the traffic to and from the Newarke passed under this archway, but in that year it was diverted to a new road on the north side of the Gate.

(2) The Turret Gateway, before referred to. A drawing of this Gateway was made by John Flower before its partial destruction in 1832, an engraving of which will be found in the Literary Remains of John Stockdale Hardy. Mr. Hardy, who died in 1849, occupied a neighbouring house, and he is said to have sustained "the structure of this ancient gateway at his own expense," thus preserving to Leicester "one of the few existing memorials of its former state."

(3) The Trinity Hospital. The original house was first restored about 1776. In recent years it has been almost entirely

re-built, only part of the old building being left. The chapel, however, yet remains, enriched by several objects salved from various wrecks, such as the recumbent effigy taken from the Collegiate Church, and the carved oak fronts of seats and altar rails removed from Wigston's Hospital.

(4) The 14th century house which is now used as St. Mary's Vicarage was probably at one time the residence of the Dean of Newarke College. Externally this dwelling retains much of its ancient appearance.

(5) Portions of the West, South and East boundary walls of the Newarke enclosure were standing in recent years, and fragments of "Rupert's Tower," as the South Gate has been named, may yet be found. There are traces of walls in Bonner's Lane, built into several cottages and into a warehouse or engineer's shop. Some good illustrations of the old boundary walls of the Newarke, as they appeared in 1838, and a view of Rupert's Tower in 1821, will be found in Mr. J. F. Hollings' pamphlet on "Leicester during the great Civil War," which was published at Leicester in 1840.

(6) The dwelling-house erected in 1512 by William Wigston near the Turret Gateway, has lately escaped destruction. It was the chantry-house of the two priests of Wigston's Chantry in the Collegiate Church of the Newarke, and bears above its door-way the arms of the founder. When its destruction was threatened, about ten years ago, a determined effort to save it was made on the initiative of the Leicestershire Archæological Society, with the active co-operation of Mr. Sydney A. Gimson, who was then Chairman of the Leicester Museum and Art Gallery Committee. Nearly £3,600 were then subscribed, and the chantry house and two adjoining Jacobean houses with their gardens were assigned to ten gentlemen who had secured an option of purchasing them for the benefit of the town, upon the understanding that, as soon as the property could be freed from all burden of debt, it should be transferred to the Corporation of Leicester, to be preserved as an historical memorial of the past, and in the hope that it would be used as a Leicester and County Museum, dealing specially with matters of local interest. There is still a debt of £5,500 on the property, which

must be cleared off before this excellent scheme can be completed; but one may feel confident that some of Leicester's patriotic and prosperous citizens will quickly grasp this remarkable opportunity of doing a lasting service to their City.

(7) Two pointed arches, which form part of the cellar wall of an old house now standing on part of the site of the Church of Our Lady of the Newarke, and the effigy of a lady removed to the chapel of Trinity Hospital, are all that remain from the wreck of the Collegiate Church.

The mediæval WALLS of Leicester were originally kept in repair at the expense of the community, and with the help of murage tolls. During the 13th century they were maintained in good order. In the following century also, as the Borough Records show, they were from time to time repaired. A pit, for example, on one of the walls, in which corn grew up, was filled in with sand and gravel; and trees that had grown up in the Town Ditches were cut down. But the stones were tempting to builders, and the broad ditches under the walls' shelter offered desirable ground for the cultivation of fruit and vegetables. Long before 1500 the old fortifications began to assume a picturesque and peaceful aspect. The crumbling walls and the slopes of the outer ditches, which varied in width from 40 to 47 feet, were parcelled out, by the year 1492, in small plots among some eighty different holders. They were used mainly as gardens and orchards, but on some parts of the wall, and in the ditches, houses and barns had been built. Upon one strip of land, 40 feet wide and 430 feet long, between the Town Wall and Churchgate, were two pairs of butts, held by the "commons of Leicester," for the practice of archery. In 1587 the walls were described by the Town Clerk as "ruinous"; and in 1591 an order was made that no stone should be taken from the Town Walls without the license of a common hall. Queen Elizabeth paid a keeper of the walls £4 5s. 4d. annually, but this "Wallership," which concerned the Castle and Newarke walls only, may have been a sinecure. A lady who visited Leicester towards the end of the 17th century, wrote in her Diary:—"Ye walls now are only to secure gardens that are made of ye ruined places that were buildings of strength." A

few of these gardens that were sheltered by the mediæval stone walls of the town survived into modern times, but the walls have now disappeared, and only a few scattered fragments remain. Portions of the East Wall may perhaps yet be seen between East Bond Street and Churchgate; and near Cumberland Street, out of which runs a "City Wall Street," may be traced some relics of the old North Wall.

The ditches outside the town Walls were not entirely filled up for some centuries. One day in 1714 or 1715, a certain Mrs. Dickman, when walking home from St. Margaret's Church along Churchgate, was unexpectedly rescued from oblivion by a sudden storm of wind, which carried her off her feet, and "blew her into the Town Ditch." This ditch remained till the middle of the 18th century.

Most of the other walls in the town were made of mud. When saltpetre was urgently required in the reign of Queen Elizabeth for the manufacture of gunpowder, it was proposed that all the mud walls within the borough should be broken down in order that supplies might be obtained. The Mayor then stated that, if this proposal were carried out, the damage done to the town would amount to "1,000 marks or thereabouts," that is to say, between £650 and £700 of that day's money, and many thousands of pounds of ours. There must therefore have been a very considerable number of mud walls. Only a few of them lasted into our own times, which old inhabitants will remember, such as the remnants which lingered on the boundary of the old shooting butts in Butt Close Lane, and a wall which was standing within recent memory in Newarke Street.

The four GATES, or GATEHOUSES, of the town were kept in better repair than the walls, and they remained standing until the year 1774. They were then all pulled down to meet modern requirements, having been sold by auction at the Three Crowns Hotel, in four lots, as building material. But the width of the entrances was not altered for some years. Throsby complained that only "the humble roofs of the Gates were sold in 1774, being considered as obstacles to the passage of a lofty

load of hay or straw. The walls which supported these roofs were left standing in general."

Of the old stone BRIDGES, which served the needs of the town for many centuries, one, the North Bridge, was washed away by a flood in 1795. The other three were demolished in the 19th century, as they then proved insufficient to carry the constantly increasing traffic.

The HOUSES of Leicester, throughout the Middle Ages, were built of wood and plaster, and either thatched or, in some cases, covered with Swithland slates. Stone was used occasionally in a few important buildings, but brick was hardly, if at all, employed in the construction of houses at Leicester until the end of the 17th century. In the Town Chamberlains' Accounts bricks are never mentioned before the year 1586, when " lyme, ston, and brycke " were used for building the conduit head in St. Margaret's Field. When John Leland visited the town about 1536, he remarked that " the whole town of Leicester at this time is builded of timber ; " and, more than a hundred years later, it presented very much the same appearance to John Evelyn, who calls it in his Diary " the old and ragged city of Leicester." At the end of the 17th century another visitor described the town as " old timber building, except one or two of brick."

The most interesting examples of domestic architecture, besides the Wigston Chantry House, and the old Vicarage of St. Mary's, which survived into modern times were the following :

(1) An old house in High Cross Street, now known as Wigston House.
(2) The old " Parliament House," in Redcross Street.
(3) The Blue Boar Inn.
(4) An old house in St. Nicholas Street associated both with Bunyan and Wesley.
(5) The " Lord's Place," in the present High Street, with the Porter's Lodge and Gardener's Cottage.
(6) The Old Barn, in Horsefair Street.
(7) The Confratery of Wigston's Hospital.

(8) Some old timbered houses in Little Lane and Highcross Street.

(1) This house was formerly supposed to have been a Chantry House of the Guild of St. George. The original front was taken down in 1796, and the ancient stained glass, which then filled the long range of windows that look on to the court-yard of the house, was taken away. This glass has been carefully preserved, having been for many years in the possession of the Leicestershire Archæological Society, and it is now displayed in the City Museum. It has been reproduced in colour in the Transactions of the Society, which at the same time published an elaborate description of the various panels, written by Thomas North. The Hall of the Guild of St. George stood on the eastern side of St. Martin's Church, beyond the Maiden Head Inn, and it is very doubtful if the house in the old High Street was ever owned by that Guild. It is thought now that it was the dwelling-place of some wealthy burgess. The original building and the stained glass seem both to belong to the reign of Henry VII, and it is conjectured (mainly on account of the initials R. W. inscribed on two of the pieces of glass), that the house may have been built and occupied by Roger Wigston, who was Mayor of Leicester in 1465, 1472 and 1487, and M.P. for Leicester in 1473 and 1488. He died in 1507, and was buried in the Lady Chapel of St. Martin's Church.

(2) This old house was always called the "Parliament House," on account of a tradition which maintained that Parliament had once met there. It was pulled down, unfortunately, in the last century, but there is a very good illustration of it, showing the heraldic devices displayed upon its front, in Mrs. Fielding Johnson's "Glimpses of Ancient Leicester." It is on record that Parliament met on February 18th, 1425-6, in the great Hall of Leicester Castle. Both Lords and Commons there listened to a speech of Cardinal Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester and Chancellor of England, after which the Commons were directed by the Chancellor to assemble "in quadam bassa camera," to elect a Speaker. The accommodation provided by the "Parliament House" would answer to this description,

and as the house stood hard by the Castle, one might reasonably accept the local tradition, and conclude that the Commons really met in the " low chamber " of this ancient dwelling-place.

(3) The Blue Boar Inn remained in existence, although not used as an Inn, until 1836. " The Blue Boar," wrote James Thompson in 1844, in his Handbook of Leicester, " was taken down a few years since by a speculating builder to erect some modern houses upon its site. Whilst its previous owner (Miss Simons, a lady of the old school) was alive, it was preserved from the hand of the destroyer ; but on her death no one was found to rescue this relic of national interest from its destruction."

(4) This old house, in which John Bunyan lodged, according to local tradition, in the reign of Charles II, and which John Wesley occupied in the next century, was standing in St. Nicholas Street not many years ago, but has now disappeared.

(5) A house in the Swinesmarket, known as " Reynold's House," was purchased by the Earl of Huntingdon in 1569, and thenceforth, under the name of " Lord's Place," became the town-house of his family. Several royal visitors were there entertained, including Mary Queen of Scots and Charles I. The house itself, though perhaps not all the grounds, belonged at one time to the family of Reynolds, who provided Leicester with so many Mayors. It was bought in 1540 by Nicholas Reynold, who was Mayor in 1531 and 1539. On the East it was bounded by the George, on the West by a messuage belonging to the King, and it extended on the North as far as Soapers' Lane. The grounds of Lord Huntingdon's house seem to have been more extensive ; and it is thought that an old house called " The Porter's Lodge," formerly standing at the corner of South and East Bond Streets, lay at the north-east entrance of his property. An old building, still to be seen at the junction of Free School Lane and West Bond Street, and known as " The Gardener's Cottage," may also have belonged to the Place. One of the lofty stone turrets of this mansion, concealed in 18th century brickwork, survived until the year 1902, when the premises to which it belonged were demolished.

(6) Among the real estate granted to the Mayor and Burgesses of Leicester by Queen Elizabeth's Charter of 1589 was "an old Barn with the Barn-yard in Horsefair Street." This ancient building may perhaps have been the "Fermerie" of the Grey Friars, in which the Commons met in 1414. After many generations, it was adapted to another use, being converted, in the year 1752, into a place of worship for Methodists. Twenty years later, John Wesley preached in the great building to very large congregations. It was taken down in 1787.

(7) The very picturesque old house of the Confrater of Wigston's Hospital stood in High Cross Street, and was destroyed in 1875.

(8) A few old timbered houses of ancient date are to be found in High Cross Street, at the corner of Red Cross Street, and in Little Lane. The White Lion Inn, between Cank Street and the Market Place, probably dates from the reign of Queen Elizabeth, but has been much altered.

The Free Grammar School, built in 1573 out of the ruins of St. Peter's church, was closed as a school in 1841. It is still standing, at the corner of High Cross Street and Free School Lane, being now used as a carpet warehouse. The arms of Queen Elizabeth and those of the Borough of Leicester are united upon its front. It is a plain structure of little beauty. There are, in fact, in modern Leicester scarce half a dozen buildings left, apart from the five old churches, in which the genuine spirit of the Middle Age is still able to charm.

Arches of Collegiate Church The Newarke.

XIV.

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